Capstone: EFL Teaching Portfolio

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# Abstract

This teaching portfolio discusses my beliefs in teaching, how I practiced those beliefs in my projects completed in the academic program, and implications for my future career, all of which were developed during my two years of study at Vanderbilt University. It contains three parts, 1) my philosophy of teaching, 2) artifact analyses, and 3) implications and future considerations. In my teaching philosophy, I include three main strategies: 1) forming a student-centered classroom, 2) incorporating L1 in English language classrooms and 3) conducting communicative language teaching. I then use the above strategies as a theoretical framework to analyze five artifacts that I created, including an investigation, a curriculum, an interview report, a lesson plan and a language assessment. In the end, I discuss my strengths and weaknesses in living out my strategies in those artifacts, challenges I anticipate to experience in the future to conducting these strategies and how I will be working to continue to improve myself in teaching.

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**Philosophy of Teaching**

**Overview**

Born and raised in Jiangsu, a province in east China, whenever I look back to my past experience of learning English as a compulsory course in my secondary education, be it in a private foreign language middle school or a public high school, my memories are almost all about how I could achieve a higher score on tests, rather than how I could actually use English as a communication tool or how I could understand English with all its profound historical, religious and cultural background. It seemed that English was another subject that could be summarized by equations and principles; and it was as if as long as the students can recite what was in the textbooks and complete the tests, they would be able to grasp English. This was not the case. Even three years after I graduated from high school, when I went back to a public middle school as a student teacher of English, and when I was tutoring some high school students part-time, I realized that those patterns of teaching English have not changed much.

Envisioning myself after graduation, I hope that I can be an ELA (English Language Arts) teacher in an international high school in east China. Take the school (Kang Chiao International School) where I had my internship as an example: over 95% of the students are Chinese who plan to pursue tertiary education in English-speaking countries such as the United States and the United Kingdom. The other 5% or less students are usually from Asian countries including South Korea, Japan and Singapore, who moved to China because of their parents' works. Based on what I know about that school, those non-Chinese students are evenly distributed in each class and grade-level

and they choose to enroll in international schools to be prepared to study further in English-dominant countries as well. Thus, if I am going to be their teacher, my major teaching goals will be twofold: to prepare them for the language tests (i.e., TOEFL or IELTS) they need to take in order to be admitted; and to prepare them for actively participating in an English-dominant learning environment.

Therefore, considering what I want to change about English teaching in China and what my future students will need, my philosophy of teaching mainly consists of the following three ideas: forming a student-centered classroom, incorporating L1 into English language classrooms and conducting communicative language teaching.

## Forming a Student-Centered Classroom

Wiggins and McTighe (2012) put forward a metaphor concerning the relationship between teachers and students that resonates with my beliefs in student-centered classrooms. They argued that students are the primary clients of teachers, which means all the curricula, assessments, instructional designs, etc. made by the teachers should be closely tied to the needs of the students (Wiggins & McTighe, 2012). Valenzuela (1999, as cited in Jiménez, Smith & Teague, 2009) suggested that in order for teachers to show they care about their students, they have to make a start at completely understanding students' environment academically and socially. Both the statements above stress the importance of teachers putting students at the center of their attention as well as in macro- and micro-design. A student-centered classroom, in my opinion, should be culturally responsive (Gay, 2010) and closely tied to students' needs; and during the class, the

teachers should perform contingent scaffolding for the students so that the lesson can be more effective and engaging (Daniel et al., 2015).

As I have mentioned in the previous section, in my past experience of learning English, I had always felt English was detached from real life. However, in fact, students' lives and their "funds of knowledge" (Moll et al., 1992) are valuable and should be involved in the process of learning English. Besides what is contained in textbooks, teachers should also pay attention to students' lives, not only what is currently around them, but also what they have experienced and what might interest them. For example, teachers may schedule meetings with students and their parents in small groups or even individually after class, creating a light-hearted environment and exploring students' interests and past experience. In class, teachers could ask them to introduce to others their culture, family traditions or anything that is special or unique to them and relevant to class content using English. This would be a good chance for them to utilize English as they learn and also to know about each other, forming necessary respect for other cultures and understanding cultural diversity. A "literacy log" (Skerrett, 2015), for example, could be used to help both parties in the class learn more about students' language use and let students be the master of their own language development.

As teachers, no matter which subject we are teaching, a critical question that we should take into consideration is how we can "care for" rather than just "care about" the students. These two expressions are different in that the former encompasses active engagement including "concern, compassion, commitment, responsibility and action" (Gay, 2010, p.48). Teachers should put

themselves into students' shoes and try considering what works best for students from different cultural and language backgrounds. Therefore, Gay (2010) introduced the notion of "culturally responsive teaching" as the answer to how teachers could equitably serve their students. I also appreciate the idea of "backward design" by Wiggins and McTighe (2012) greatly in terms of what attitudes teachers should hold when preparing lessons. Instead of thinking too much about "teaching", what teachers should really care about should be "learning" – that is what the students are going to need, what they are going to gain through the process, how much of the content they are going to understand, and how they can benefit more from the lessons, etc.

Another point I want to include in forming a student-centered classroom is that the teachers should perform contingent scaffolding in the class (Daniel et al., 2015). Many times, the teachers tend to put much effort in preparing and designing a lesson, which although necessary, could lead to over-scaffolding (Daniel et al., 2015). Under such circumstances, if a teacher tries too hard in sticking to the pre-written plan or the preset curriculum, students' specific needs and questions during the class could be ignored. In fact, to best serve their students, teachers should always be ready to respond to the students, adjust their teaching based on students' reactions and provide chances for students to be engaged in collaborative discussion so as to reach the goal of "comprehension as sense-making" (Daniel et al., 2015, p.5).

## Incorporating L1 into English Language Classrooms

Another essential problem that we have to face is: in what position should the teachers put students' first languages when they learn English and how could they be utilized? For far too long

there has been a false impression in many Chinese parents and school administrators' minds that

Chinese should be minimized in English classes so that the students can learn English more

effectively. In my opinion, however, students' first languages should always be valued and

"translanguaging" should be used as a strategy to facilitate students' English learning.

Translanguaging practices include "code-switching, translating, language brokering or

interpreting between culturally and linguistically diverse individuals" (Tse, 1996, cited by Daniel

& Pacheco, 2015, p. 645). They summarized that translanguaging helps develop students'

proficiency in those languages, meta-linguistic awareness, and their English reading skills. As a

matter of fact, for culturally and linguistically diverse students, their native languages contribute

greatly to their sense of identity, and work as a medium that helps them socialize and transmit their

own culture; and since their first language development impacts their second language

development directly, a less complicated way to start the instruction of English literacy is to build

on what they already know about their own language (Herrera, Perez & Escamilla, 2015), which

is similar to Daniel and Pacheco's idea above. Carrasquillo (1994, cited by Carrasquillo, Kucer &

Abrams, 2004) agreed that ELLs could use their experience of learning their first language to

facilitate their second language acquisition. Therefore, in the future, I will not avoid using Chinese

when teaching English, especially for beginners. For grammar rules, I will choose to purposefully

elaborate in Chinese and make comparisons between Chinese and English so that the students can

establish a more solid foundation for the knowledge. If there are Japanese or Korean students in

my class, I might seek help from the school to make sure that these students can receive due

language support.

Krashen (1985) put forward the idea of "i + 1" in teaching EL students and that teachers should generate more "comprehensible input" (Krashen, 2003) during class. The idea of his language teaching theories, although mainly focusing on adding comprehensible next-level language features into students' input, to some extent, also encourages teachers to incorporate students' L1 in teaching the target language to help students comprehend. Besides, during class if only the target language is promoted or allowed to be used, the topics of students' input and output would be very limited. However, if the teachers take advantage of what the students already know in their native language, the topics could be largely enriched and made more relevant to students' individual identities.

## Conducting Communicative Language Teaching

Communicative language teaching (CLT), as is obviously seen in its name, aims at enabling the learners to communicate in the target language and in given situations, and the learning takes place during the process of learners' "struggling to communicate" (Alamri, 2018, p. 132). According to Maley (1984, as cited by Anderson, 1993), CLT focuses more on: language use rather than only language form; fluency rather than simply accuracy; language tasks rather than language exercise; students' initiative rather than teacher-centered direction; customized teaching rather than a panacea; and the awareness of varied language use rather than the language itself.

Communicative competence is seen as the goal of second language learning by some North American scholars (Hiep, 2007). Although the definition of communicative competence could be

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slightly varied among different authors, it is clear that it includes both linguistic knowledge of a language and the ability of properly using the language in any social circumstances for various purposes (Alamri, 2018; Hiep, 2007; Zhang & Wang, 2012).

Brown (2000) argued that in English language teaching there should not be "a method for all" (p. 40). Instead, he proposed an "enlightened, eclectic approach" (Brown, 2000, p. 40) where the teaching features are affected by the synthesis of a number of teaching and learning principles, and inspired by the interconnection between CLT theories, contextual analysis and classroom observation. However, in the spirit of CLT, he insisted that the teachers should be well aware of the tenets of the CLT approach and then properly practice to their conviction. In order to realize this idea, Hu (2005) who also stood for an eclectic approach for teachers, suggested that schools and teacher educators should work on 1) heightening teachers' awareness of contextual factors, 2) build up teachers' competence in analyzing and overcoming contextual constraints, and 3) develop sound guidelines for teachers to make methodological choices. By doing so, hopefully the teachers would be able to have a handful of useful teaching activities and strategies at their disposal when facing students. In real teaching practice, Brown (2000) also suggested that the teachers should take a few "calculated risks" (p. 40) in the classrooms to explore and test new activities that best fit the needs of students and further help build an innovative, beneficial cycle.

Secondly, contextual factors are always critical in designing, giving and reflecting on a lesson, which means instead of adopting CLT, we should adapt it to the conditions of specific areas and schools (Brown, 2000; Hiep, 2007). In China where there have been years of English language

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teaching in the traditional grammar-oriented way, both the teachers and the students have been used to this pattern. Therefore, abruptly and thoroughly changing the methods of English language teaching within a short time is unlikely to be feasible or have a good result. Yu (2001) suggested that the teachers should seek to combine traditional analytic teaching with CLT to suit a Chinese foreign language learning classroom. As a matter of fact, the communicative methodology and the traditional EFL teaching methodology are not contradictory with each other; but rather, they can be complementary (Li, 1989, as cited by Sun & Cheng, 2002, p. 77). The reason behind this synergy is that students' fully understanding grammar rules and being able to correctly put them into use, as the ultimate goal of traditional grammar-based teaching, could build a solid foundation for them to communicate accurately and properly in English. Therefore, it is possible that the EFL teachers can combine communicative activities and non-communicative ones to form a "locally appropriate communicative approach" (Rao, 2002, p. 98). Or, if we take one step further, the teachers can organically combine the two, by using interactive activities to teach grammar or transferring paper-based text analysis into classroom discussion so that the students can get more chances to meaningfully make use of English (Sun & Cheng, 2002).

Thirdly, Brown (2000) specifically stressed the importance of not relinquishing grammar while encouraging students' spontaneity; in the meanwhile, one should not overdo some certain CLT features such as intentionally avoiding all the interrupting and correcting the students during the conversation, either. Alamri (2018) pointed out that grammar, "instead of being an optional add-on to communication, it actually lies at the heart of communication" (p. 134). Anderson (1993)

as well concurred that students' being knowledgeable of grammar does not have to compromise their focus on building up communicative competence.

I appreciate the approach of CLT greatly and I have always supported the idea of fostering students' communicative competence. Therefore, in my future English classes, I will try to align my teaching to what have been suggested above, adjusting my teaching methods according to the contextual factors as well as students' reactions, taking a few "calculated risks" to explore new activities to engage students into meaningful communication (Brown, 2000, p.40). I will also combine traditional analytic approaches and CLT to best suit the circumstances in China, and continuing teaching grammar to ensure that the students can communicate accurately.

In conclusion, in terms of my teaching philosophy, I mainly put forward three ideas or strategies to guide my future teaching, namely forming a student-centered classroom, incorporating L1 into English language classrooms and conducting communicative language teaching. In the future, I will try to implement them as I hope, but in the meanwhile, I will also be constantly revising them based on the contexts and the feedbacks from my students.

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## Artifact Analyses

## Professional Knowledge Area 1: Learner

This professional knowledge area concerns the *Learner*, which in my opinion is one of the most critical factors when designing lessons and activities as teachers. Learners are the receivers and participants of education; therefore, how they have interacted and will interact with their teachers and peers shapes teachers' teaching approaches, which in turn decides whether the learners can effectively grasp the knowledge they are being taught as well.

## TESOL Domain 4:    Identity and Context

*"Teachers understand the importance of who learners are and how their communities, heritages and goals shape learning and expectations of learning. Teachers recognize the importance of how context contributes to identity formation and therefore influences learning. Teachers use this knowledge of identity and settings in planning, instructing, and assessing."*

From my perspective, this standard mainly contains two pieces of information. First, teachers should value learners' identities and understand that their context, including but not limited to 1) what they have experienced, 2) what has been around them, 3) where they are from originally, and 4) where they see themselves in the future. The above four elements shape who they are, how they learn and what they want to achieve. Second, teachers should utilize this information to direct their planning, instructing and assessing procedures. The above is consistent with the suggestion that Jiménez, Smith and Teague (2009) have put forward, that teachers should try to understand students' academic and social background as thorough as possible to develop a productive

relationship with English language learners, build on their prior knowledge and engage them into the classroom. Gay (2010) also suggested that teachers should conduct "culturally responsive pedagogy" by attentively learning about and responsively teaching to fit students' culture background and needs. Teachers who learn about the students' "funds of knowledge" know them as "a whole person" and would be able to gear their teaching towards students' interests, provide more relevant content and at least to some extent avoid viewing the students with stereotypes (Moll et al., 1992).

These suggestions are in line with my philosophy of teaching. First, they are relevant to *Forming a Student-Centered Classroom* since I believe teachers should start by learning about students' academic and social milieu (Jiménez, Smith & Teague, 2009); tie their curricula, assessments, and instructional design into students' interests and needs (Wiggins & McTighe, 2012); and genuinely care for the students by first learning about and responding to their cultural background (Gay, 2010). Second, they align with *Incorporating L1 into English Language Classrooms* too, because using L1 positively affirms students' identity (de Jong, 2011) and this strategy showcases how students' identities shape teachers' teaching. Thirdly, the suggestions are consistent with *Conducting Communicative Language Teaching*, in that teachers should adapt rather than adopt their teaching methods based on the specific conditions of different contexts and student needs (Brown, 2000; Hiep, 2007).

**Artifact A**

Artifact A is used to analyze the learner identity, heritage and learning context to inform and

direct teaching and accommodation, which aligns with my teaching philosophy and TESOL Domain 4.

Specifically speaking, in the *Community Literacy* paper, I investigated, discussed and analyzed the communicative literacy of the Chinese population in Nashville area. This paper consists of six parts: a general review of the population and distribution of Chinese people; restaurants and market places that are closely related to this group; organizations that serve them; print resources written in Chinese; Chinese immigrants' views about language learning; and finally, implications for classroom teachers.

Firstly, in the *General Review* section, I introduced the Chinese population distribution in Nashville and the trend in which it has been changing recently. Based on my research on a series of relevant websites, I wrote "… generally, Chinese people in Nashville tend to assemble in one area, the center of the city, where Vanderbilt University is located. This distribution fact goes in line with what is shown at GNCA website and it can thus be presumed that the Chinese population in Nashville mainly consists of students as well as staff and faculties related to Vanderbilt University." Although for each individual student their background may be varied, the fact that the majority of the Chinese population are related to Vanderbilt University can help the teachers know about their living and learning contexts and maybe their goals. If I were the teachers, starting from learning about students' academic and social milieu (Jiménez, Smith & Teague, 2009), I would be able to know that usually for the students whose family immigrated for studying or working at Vanderbilt University, they tend to have higher academic goals.

Secondly, in the sections of *Restaurants and Markets*, *Organizations* and *Print Resources*, I discussed what is closely related to the Chinese immigrants' daily lives and the support they can receive from their community. For example, I wrote "On the website, a list of other organizations serving Chinese are also provided, including language schools, Chinese education and cultural groups and Chinese churches. There is news related to Chinese posted on the website as well." Using such information, even for teachers who are not so familiar with Chinese culture, they can have a glance at Chinese immigrant students' lives. In my mind, if I were to engage these Chinese students into my English lessons more effectively, I would ask them to bring what is unique to them culturally to the classroom, such as a Chinese newspaper with an interesting story on it, and use them as the material to help students learn English in a more meaningful way, which is consistent with "culturally responsive pedagogy" put forward by Gay (2010).

Thirdly, in *Immigrants' Views* section, I interviewed a few Chinese immigrants on their ideas about language learning. In terms of what I found, I wrote "Being in a monolingual English environment, they are afraid of their children losing such sense of identity of being Chinese." Different than what I expected before the interviews, instead of worrying about the children's English development, they actually care more about how they can preserve their heritage language. Thus, if I were to teach these students, I would purposefully incorporate Chinese into my class, which would not only help the students develop both of the languages and their metalinguistic awareness (Goodwin & Jimenez, 2015), but also positively affirm their identities (de Jong, 2011).

One of the weaknesses of this investigation is that I did not gain insights from the students

themselves. Since Chinese students were the target group, some surveys or interviews directly with them would have made my results more authentic. In the future, if I were to teach a certain group of students, I would make sure that I reach out to them directly in advance and learn about their preferences and needs.

## TESOL Domain 6:   Learning

*"Teachers draw on their knowledge of language and adult language learning to understand the processes by which learners acquire a new language in and out of classroom settings. They use this knowledge to support adult language learning."*

In my opinion, under the circumstances I hopefully will be teaching in, this TESOL domain mainly stresses two points: first, the teachers should try to understand the process of language learning from both what they know about the language itself and their own experience of learning, as the latter can easily be ignored; second, the teachers should apply this knowledge to the language teaching. Although I am not likely to teach adults in the future, the above statements can still be applied to high school students. Theoretically speaking, according to Wiggins and McTighe (2005), when planning lessons, teachers should think from the perspective of the students, for example, what they should learn and would be able to do, rather than focusing too much on what we as teachers will do. To think from this point of view requires us to draw from our past experience as students, so that we can know what is the best way for the students to approach the new knowledge.

This idea is consistent with my philosophy of teaching. It is especially relevant to the section *Forming a Student-Centered Classroom* in which I promoted "backward designing" put forward

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by Wiggins and McTighe (2005) that students should be considered as the major clients of teachers

and thus when planning a lesson, we should think about how they would learn and what they would

be interested in. This idea aligns with *Incorporating L1 into English Language Classrooms* too

because one of the reasons why I had this strategy was I benefited from using L1 when I was

learning English as a student.

## Artifact B

Artifact B is a curriculum I co-designed with a colleague for a TOEFL reading course in

which I sufficiently made use of both my knowledge of language and my past experience of

preparing for and taking the TOEFL reading tests, which is in line with my teaching philosophy

and TESOL Domain 6.

In the *Scope and Sequence of Curriculum*, we first introduced our goals, configuration of each

lesson and what the students should do to achieve maximized effectiveness. Then, we designed the

topics for 10 weeks, 3 lessons each week and wrote in detail the first three weeks of lessons.

First of all, different than regular TOEFL reading lessons my partner and I used to take in

which the main focus was only on test-taking skills and languages, our design put reading articles

with the same topic into one week as a unit and we organized relevant units to be taught in two to

three consecutive weeks to form a module. For example, for the first two weeks, the topics were

"Geology" and "Ecology" respectively, while the following two weeks focused on "History" and

"Archeology". The rationale behind this design was that teachers should design the course in the

most favorable sequence for the students so that they can be most ready to acquire knowledge

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(Nation & Macalister, 2020). When I was a learner of TOEFL reading, although I enjoyed the diversified knowledge contained in each article, I was also bothered by not being able to learn about each topic further or more comprehensively as the topics were constantly changing. Therefore, when designing this curriculum, we decided to put relevant topics together.

Secondly, as my partner and I both agreed upon, TOEFL reading lessons could be a bit boring if the teachers only focused on having the students practicing completing the comprehension questions repetitively. Not that it is not useful in helping the students gaining a higher score, but it is likely to demotivate the students. Therefore, in the curriculum, we planned to have some creative activities from time to time so that the students could be attracted to the lessons. For example, for one of the articles under the topic of "Geology", we designed an activity called "cause-effect chains" (see Appendix) for the students to fill in so that they could better understand the article and in a more interesting way. According to Nassaji and Fotos (2011), these creative activities require the students to work in a collaborative way and thus reach their highest potential. Besides, imagining ourselves as students, if we were provided these activities, we would be more enthusiastic about the class and behave better (Wubbels, 2011).

Thirdly, in our curriculum, we incorporated content relevant to the culture of English-speaking countries, especially when talking about topics on liberal arts such as history, art and music. When I first moved to the United States, I noticed many cultural differences, which took me quite some time to get used to, even though I had heard of some of them. My partner shared the same opinion as me. Given the fact that all our target students who would take this course

would be studying in English-dominant countries, we believe that doing so helps them get used to the new environment easier. Besides, since culture is an essential and inseparable part of the language (Van Lier, 2004), incorporating cultural background knowledge into the lessons will help the students learn about the language and the community of native speakers in a more comprehensive way.

In my future teaching career, if I am going to use this curriculum, besides what has already been included in it, if time permits, I would also want to have the students read more authentic texts as a complement, such as some fiction that attracts their interest. From my experience, I learned that sufficient amount of input would not only help them gain more vocabulary, but also gradually acquire the ability to access and understand the articles in a more efficient and effective way.

In my opinion, teachers should try their best to consider the perspectives of learners to understand who they are; teachers should also draw from their own experience to see more clearly what can best facilitate teaching and learning. Learners should always be considered within a certain learning context. Therefore, in the following section, the learning context will be discussed in detail.

### Professional Knowledge Area 2: The Learning Context

This section discusses *The Learning Context* of the professional knowledge area. From my perspective, the learning context refers to not only the physical context at school where the learner studies, how the teachers and peers treat and support each other, but also the learner's personal

history and background, and how their family is involved the learning process. Each student has a unique learning context by which their personality is shaped and how they are learning is determined. Therefore, when designing activities, lessons or curricula, it is essential that the teacher takes into consideration the specific learning context of each student.

## TESOL Domain 2: Instructing

*"Teachers create supportive environments that engage all learners in purposeful learning and promote respectful classroom interactions."*

This statement describes the requirements for the teachers in a classroom. In my opinion, it stresses that first, teachers should carefully scaffold the class to meet the needs of students, achieve the goals of the lesson and thus support the students' learning; second, they should promote a learning environment in which the diversity of students are respected. These requirements are closely relevant to "culturally responsive pedagogy" Gay (2010) has promoted, that the teachers should "care for" the students rather than "care about" the students. In addition, as Echevarría, Vogt and Short (2017) have suggested, teachers should activate students' background knowledge and make linkage between the new knowledge and what they have already known.

These ideas are consistent with my philosophy of teaching. For one thing, it is related to *Forming a student-centered classroom*. Envisioning myself in the future, I believe that to best facilitate students' learning, a teacher should create a classroom environment where the unique background of students is valued. As Wiggins and McTighe (2012) has put forward, students are the primary client of teachers, which stressed the importance of teachers gearing their instruction

towards students' needs. For another, *Incorporating L1 into English language classrooms* is also relevant to this view. By involving students' first language into the classroom, not only can we ensure they understand the knowledge more thoroughly without the confusion caused by language barrier (de Jong, 2011), we can also activate their learning experience and strategies in their L1 (Echevarría, Vogt, & Short, 2017). Besides, we positively confirm their identity by this deed (de Jong, 2011). The ideas are consistent with *Conducting Communicative Language Teaching* as well, in that in order to create a supportive and engaging environment, teachers are supposed to pay close attention to students' needs and the context they are living in (Brown, 2000; Hiep, 2007); also, since CLT is aimed at having learners learn to use the language through the process of "struggling to communicate" (Alamri, 2018, p. 132), the students are engaged in an environment that promote purposeful learning.

**Artifact C**

Artifact C is used to analyze how a teacher should pre-assess the students' learning context, what kind of information should be gathered and how they are relevant to creating a supportive environment, which is closely related to TESOL Domain 2 and my philosophy of teaching.

*Interview Report* of an English language learner aims at assessing a student's learning context prior to giving lessons to them. In order to elicit as much information relevant to language learning of the student as possible, I designed a semi-structured survey and interviewed one of my friends who was studying at the University of Edinburgh as an English language learner. The paper includes two major parts, which respectively discussed my findings on this student's cultural,

experiential, academic and linguistic background; and her education context in the University of Edinburgh. Although she is not and will not be my student, in this paper, I imagined myself as a would-be teacher of hers so that I can consider more comprehensively about what aspects I will need to know about her.

Firstly, I discussed my friend's nationality, first language and her history of learning English. I also noted her language preference when talking with her peers of similar background because I believe that would be the time when she feels most relaxed. I wrote "With her Chinese peers at the University of Edinburgh, she tends to use Chinese mixed with English when she does not know how to translate certain terms, which she considers as translanguaging." Learning about a student's L1 and then purposefully incorporating it into the classroom affirms the student's identity (de Jong, 2011) and helps build on their metalinguistic awareness (Goodwin & Jimenez, 2015). Besides, Wei (2011) also commented that translanguaging helps the EL students to draw on their past experience and background and form a coordinated and meaningful system of which they can make sense. Thus, teachers can use this information to choose the most suitable language and materials for the class to activate students' background knowledge, make them feel more comfortable in class and ultimately learn the target language better.

Secondly, I touched upon her parents' and her own view about learning English so that I can know about her motivation of learning English and what are some driven factors in her learning history, which are essential too. I wrote "As far as she concerns, what is most important about English is how one can communicate with others effectively and to learn and understand English

together with the culture behind it." As a teacher, if we get such information, we would know that her goal of learning English, instead of reaching certain academic scores, is actually using English as a communication tool, which is consistent with the spirit of CLT as I have mentioned in the third part of teaching philosophy. Thus, if I really were her teacher, I could provide more chances for her to practice conversational skills during the class.

Thirdly, I shifted my attention to her life in the University of Edinburgh, concerning accommodations of EL students, her view of the Scottish culture and her observations on campus. I wrote "She also mentioned that Chinese students liked to stick together and many of them did not enjoy interacting with people from other background as much, probably because Chinese people tend to be more reserved." Gay (2010) suggested that teachers should "care for" instead of "care about" the students and the difference is that the former stresses that that the teachers put themselves into the students' shoes and see how they are viewing everything surrounding them. Apparently, being a teacher and being a student could be drastically different even in the same environment. Thus, it is important that the teachers learn about the circumstances from the student's point of view to see how the school really is like being a minority student in it without assuming the situation by reading the protocols provided by the school. For example, if I were her teacher, given the fact that she wanted to know more about the Scottish culture, I would suggest her to go out of her comfort zone, expand her friend circle to students from other countries, especially those native students so that she can really "live" the culture and hopefully grasp the language better.

To conclude, teachers should pay attention to creating a learning context in which the students can be valued, respected; and the goals of the lessons, their purposes and needs fulfilled. But the content of a lesson is never less important. Thus, I will then discuss the curriculum.

### Professional Knowledge Area 3: Curriculum

This professional knowledge area brings our attention to *Curriculum*. A curriculum is a bridge between teachers and students, depending on which the knowledge can be jointly developed. Teachers design, adjust and fulfill a curriculum according to the needs and interests of the students so that the goals can be achieved most effectively and efficiently. In my opinion, a responsible teacher should always be willing to make changes on the pre-written curricula or plan a curriculum based on their close interaction and comprehensive observation of the students. Lessons make up a curriculum and thus each of them should also bear the same criteria as we set for the curricula.

### TESOL Domain 1: Planning

*"Teachers plan instruction to promote learning and meet learner goals, and modify plans to assure learner engagement and achievement."*

From my perspective, this TESOL domain stressed two things: first, what a teacher plans to teach and how s/he is going to conduct the teaching should be aiming at best serving the students' interests, needs, their preferences in the way of learning and their learning goals; second, after the teacher has tried out the plan with the students, or after the teacher has known better about the target students, s/he makes appropriate and necessary changes to the plan to actually make sure that the aims in the previous point get realized. More specifically, teachers should always be

considering what is the best way for the students to learn, what they should understand and be capable of, when planning a lesson (Wiggins & McTighe, 2012); and teachers should also always pay attention to generating "comprehensible input" for the students, and tapping on the students' background knowledge and interests to best facilitate their learning (Echevarría, Vogt & Short, 2017).

These ideas resonate with my philosophy of teaching. First off, it goes in line with my opinions in *Forming a Student-Centered Classroom* in which I agreed upon the idea that teachers should always be ready to plan their instruction in a way that best fits the students' needs and interests (Wiggins & McTighe, 2012) so that the students can be sufficiently motivated. Secondly, it aligns with the spirit of *Conducting Communicative Language Teaching*. Brown (2000, p. 40) suggested that in English language teaching, teachers should conduct an "enlightened, eclectic" approach where they adjust their teaching methods based on the synthesis of teaching theories, contextual analysis and classroom observation.

**Artifact B**

As I have mentioned in previous sections, Artifact B is the curriculum of a TOEFL reading course I co-designed with a colleague that caters to the needs of Chinese students in international high schools in China. This artifact is closely related to this TESOL domain as well as my teaching philosophy. *The Scope and Sequence of the Curriculum* mainly contains two parts, 1) an introduction to the goals of this curriculum and directions of how teachers should use this curriculum to maximize the teaching effect; and 2) the actual plan for the topic of each week and

configuration of each lesson.

Firstly, in order to promote learning, my partner and I decided to arrange all the TOEFL reading articles based on their topics, and have relevant topics to be taught in a row as a module so that we can hopefully reach best teachability (Macalister & Nation, 2020) because for one thing, this ensures that the students' attention can be best focused on one large topic without being distracted; for another, consistent topics make sure the vocabulary (fields and frequency) that the students are exposed to are of one system (Macalister & Nation, 2020) and thus easier to be memorized and retrieved. Besides, given the fact that the topics in TOEFL reading are very diversified, doing so helps learners gain some knowledge in the target field systematically, which aligns with learning goals because this may help them develop some ideas about in what direction they are going to further study once they enter the college. For example, we have topics ranging from liberal arts such as history to STEM subjects like biology; and we put relevant topics such as "education" and "psychology" together.

Secondly, we allowed much freedom for the teachers who will be using this curriculum so that they have space to customize or modify their lessons as the course goes on and based on their students' needs to maximize engagement and achievement. I wrote "because each class is unique and every individual may generate different outcomes and questions to the same material and homework, there will be some open time for teachers to deal with unanticipated questions during the class." According to Macalister and Nation (2020), during the process of enacting a curriculum, teachers should constantly monitor and analyze the students' ongoing needs and environment.

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In my future teaching context, I could see this kind of curriculum as of big potential in both fulfilling students' need in passing the TOEFL tests and preparing them for better adjusting a new environment upon entering college in an English-speaking country. However, my colleague and I created this curriculum mostly based on our own experience. As we all know, how people interact with each other changes as time goes, and each student would have different needs and interests so we could not predict everything. Therefore, in the future I would adapt this curriculum to better fit the students' situation or create new curriculum based on my analysis of them.

**TESOL Domain 7: Content**

*"Teachers understand that language learning is most likely to occur when learners are trying to use the language for genuine communicative purposes. Teachers understand that the content of the language course is the language that learners need in order to listen, to talk about, to read and write about a subject matter or content area. Teachers design their lessons to help learners acquire the language they need to successfully communicate in the subject or content areas they want/need to learn about."*

This TESOL domain stresses the essential role of communicative language teaching. In my mind, it talks about two major things: firstly, meaningful communication helps build on learners' English language ability most effectively; secondly, teachers should consciously add in language features that would help the learners meaningfully use the language in certain content areas. According to Alamri (2018), language learning takes place during the process of learners' "struggling to communicate" (p. 132). As one of the goals of communicative language teaching,

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communicative competence includes both the linguistic knowledge of the language and the ability

of properly using the language in certain social circumstances for certain purposes (Alamri, 2018;

Hiep, 2007; Zhang & Wang, 2012). Therefore, it is necessary that teachers include these in their

lessons.

These ideas are closely related to the third strategy in my teaching philosophy, *Conducting*

*Communicative Language Teaching*, in which I made the point that teachers should adapt an

"enlightened, eclectic" approach based on students' specific needs, taking a few "calculated risks"

to explore new activities to engage students into meaningful communication (Brown, 2000, p.40).

**Artifact D**

Artifact D is a lesson plan carefully designed to address a relatively complex topic for 10<sup>th</sup>

grade Chinese students in EFL environment, and to ensure their engagement in the lesson so that

their English language can be effectively and meaningfully developed.

The *SIOP Lesson Plan* starts with the context of the lesson, the standard, the objectives, the

theme and the materials needed. And then, I planned in detail each step of the lesson, time allotment,

purposes, interaction focuses and specific procedures. After all these, I discussed the rationale

behind the lesson plan. This lesson plan is closely related to this TESOL domain and my teaching

philosophy as the following.

Firstly, in the warm-up activity, I designed an activity for the students to discuss on "the

trolley problem" and "the footbridge dilemma", which are related to the theme of the whole lesson,

what is fair. I required the students to make use of the grammatical structures (i.e., subjunctive

mood) they had learned in previous lessons in the process of discussion so that they can meaningfully practice the language features. Different than language drills, this activity pushes the students to "struggle to communicate" (Brown, 2000, p.40). In my future teaching career, I would continue to incorporate such activities into my teaching to stimulate students' meaningful interaction and conversation.

Secondly, in the procedure for analyzing the passage "Life isn't Fair – Deal with It", I designed a series of questions for the students to discuss when encountering complex sentences. For example, I wrote "T asks the Ss the following questions: What does the author believe we cannot control? What we can control? What does he mean by "the beginning of our life"? What are some examples of "the outcomes we attain"?" These questions not only help the students better understand the sentences themselves, but also help lead their conversation in a more structured and meaningful way. In communicative language teaching, instead of adopting a certain teaching method, teachers should gear the lesson towards contextual factors (Brown, 2000; Hiep, 2007). Thus, when I was designing this lesson plan, I considered the facts that Chinese students usually face difficulties in dealing with longer sentences and they often need some help in establishing a conversation, and thus added this procedure in it. In my future teaching, I will always take various contextual factors and students into consideration and adjust my approach accordingly. However, since the real situation could be much more complicated than ideal, I will have to be more patient and careful about how I get the necessary information and how to make justified judgement to direct my teaching planning.

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In a nutshell, in planning and conducting a curriculum, teachers should be careful about how they can best meet the goals and promote learning; teachers should also aim at helping the students meaningfully use the language they are learning. Next, as an essential part of teaching and planning, assessment teachers should conduct and how we should make use of it will be discussed.

## Professional Knowledge Area 4: Assessment

This professional knowledge area concerns *Assessment*, which in my mind refers to not only tests or evaluations of students after a certain period of teaching and learning (i.e., summative assessments), but also the on-going investigations, observations or judgements made before and during the process of learning (i.e., formative assessments). Assessments as, for and of learning (Gottlieb, 2016) are inseparable parts of teaching and learning, and in the end, benefit both teachers and students.

## TESOL Domain 3: Assessing

*"Teachers recognize the importance of and are able to gather and interpret information about learning and performance to promote the continuous intellectual and linguistic development of each learner. Teachers use knowledge of student performance to make decisions about planning and instruction "on the spot" and for the future. Teachers involve learners in determining what will be assessed and provide constructive feedback to learners, based on assessments of their learning."*

This TESOL domain discusses the important role of assessments in teaching and how teachers

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should make assessments to best facilitate learners' learning. From my perspective, this statement stresses two major points: firstly, teachers should consider information gathered from students when making decisions about teaching both contingently and for the future; secondly, learners should be involved before, during and after the process of assessments, based on which the teachers would then provide constructive feedbacks. Theoretically speaking, according to Gottlieb (2016), in assessments for learning, teachers should be focusing on the ongoing needs of the students and adjust their instruction and assessments accordingly. Besides, students' views should be valued because this would ensure that they are given the ownership in the school community (Gottlieb, 2016).

These opinions are consistent with my philosophy of teaching. In the first section, *Forming a Student-Centered Classroom*, I mentioned that teachers should perform contingent scaffolding for the students so that the students can be best engaged and facilitated (Daniel et al., 2015). Although I did not specifically discuss assessment in my teaching philosophy, enacting contingent scaffolding requires the teachers to assess the students' reactions closely during a lesson so that they can adjust their instruction methods in time to fit their needs. Also, in *Conducting Communicative Language Teaching*, Brown (2000) suggested that teachers should base their teaching approaches on the combination of pedagogical theories, contextual analysis and class observation, where the latter two are, as a matter of fact, on-going assessments.

**Artifact E**

Artifact E is a second language acquisition assessment I conducted on a Chinese college

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student majoring in Physics who just started his exchange program in the University of California – Berkeley for one semester. Although he was not my student, nor will he become my student in the future, his identity was similar to my future target students. Therefore, assessing him can be seen as a simulation of the assessments I will be enacting in the future; and what I did in this assessment goes in line with both the TESOL domain and my teaching philosophy. The *Second Language Acquisition Assessment* consists of an overall language assessment and more detailed analyses of this student's ability in pragmatics, phonology, grammar and semantics. In the end of this paper, I also provided instructional recommendations for the teachers based on my analysis.

Firstly, based on the written and oral samples I gathered during an interview with him, I gave an evaluation on his overall English language level. For example, I wrote "his speaking ability falls somewhere between B2 (independent user) and C1 (proficient user), the rationale being that during the interview, most of time he could fluently answer or interact with me with little hesitation." According to Gottlieb (2016), listening comprehension is the cornerstone of second language acquisition and it is the prerequisite of higher-level oral output. Therefore, assessing the student from oral interaction ensures that both listening and speaking were touched upon. Formative assessments for learning largely depend on how teachers make use of the knowledge to gear their instruction towards the students (Gottlieb, 2016). Thus, if I were actually his teacher, I would be able to use this information to adjust the lesson to better fit his level of English listening and speaking and thus help him improve. This can be tied back to "backward design" proposed by Wiggins and McTighe (2012) too, which is an essential part of my teaching philosophy.

Secondly, in the section *Instructional Recommendations for Pragmatics*, I gave suggestions that teachers should make sure that the students are clearer about the criteria to which their performance is compared. For example, I wrote "In order to improve Yujia's pragmatic skills, it is helpful if the instructor can let him know about the content of the four maxims so that he can consciously avoid some of the mistakes that he made during this conversation." The goes in line with one of the ideas in this TESOL domain that teachers should inform the students of and involving students in deciding what will be assessed beforehand. Ensuring students having their input in the design of an assessment and that they have tools to monitor their own growth promote student agency (Gottlieb, 2016).

Thirdly, in terms of phonological mistakes this student has made, I suggested that he should take an active role in improving his pronunciation. I wrote "For this problem, I recommend that the instructors encourage him to record himself speaking English whenever possible, and listens to it with/for him after in order to figure out common mistakes he makes." This would be a constructive feedback and advice I would provide if I were his teacher. Such assessment as learning encourages the students to be responsible for themselves and become "independent, capable thinkers" (Gottlieb, 2016, p.216). This idea echoes with my first strategy in the teaching philosophy too, because in building a student-centered classroom, what I expect for the students is for them to be an active participant in classroom interactions, rather than just a receiver.

However, given the fact that Yujia was not actually my student and we both had limited time in finishing this interview/sample-gathering process, my assessment of his English language level

could be incomprehensive. If conditions allow, I should have engaged him in more diverse language activities and observed him more closely during class so that I would be able to adjust my ongoing teaching to help improve students' achievement (Gottlieb, 2016).

In my future teaching though, given the fact that there will be at least 30 to 40 students per class, and this kind of assessments are time-consuming, I may only use it when I notice that there are some students who do need such a comprehensive language evaluation. As a substitution, I may seek to conduct some assessments that are easier to be done to multiple subjects at a time to inform my future teaching.

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## Applications to Practice: Implications and Future Considerations

In my philosophy of teaching, I brought up three key ideas that will inform my future teaching. First, in *Forming a Student-Centered Classroom*, I stressed the importance of teachers' paying close attention to students' needs, interests and identities to conduct culturally responsive pedagogy (Gay, 2010), as well as attentively monitoring the reactions of the students during class to form contingent scaffoldings (Daniel et al, 2015), because teachers should always see students as the major clients when planning and delivering the lessons (Wiggins & McTighe, 2012). Second, in *Incorporating L1 into English Language Classrooms*, I argued that EFL students should be allowed to "translanguage" when they are learning English because so that both their L1 and English skills can be improved and their meta-linguistic awareness can be built (Daniel & Pacheco, 2015); besides, using L1 is especially helpful for beginners of English in that the new knowledge can be built on what they have known about their L1 and how they acquired their L1 (Herrera, Perez & Escamilla, 2015; Carrasquillo, Kucer & Abrams, 2004). Third, in *Conducting Communicative Language Teaching*, I stated my belief that teachers should adapt their teaching approaches based on specific context and students' needs (Brown, 2000; Hiep, 2007) and help the students learn English from their "struggling to communicate" (Alamri, 2018, p. 132), but, grammar should not be left out even though communication requires fluency (Anderson, 1993; Brown, 2000; Alamri, 2018).

## Strengths in My Practice of the Teaching Philosophy

When comparing my philosophy of teaching to the artifact analyses, I found that in general,

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I have lived out most of the key ideas when I was planning lessons, designing the curriculum, conducting investigations or interviews, etc.

For example, in the *Community Literacy* paper, I gathered information on the Chinese population in Nashville, trying to make sense of my subjects by starting to learn about their academic and social milieu (Jiménez, Smith & Teague, 2009). When co-designing the *TOEFL Reading Curriculum*, my partner and I spent a decent amount of time discussing our past experiences of test preparation, because we genuinely care for the students (Gay, 2010); and so that we could see from the students' perspective what they would want and be able to learn when designing lesson plans or curricula (Wiggins & McTighe, 2012). In the *Interview* I conducted to pre-assess a student, my questions touched upon her identity, learning history, language preference, parents' expectations, study goals, current learning context, etc., to gain a comprehensive evaluation of her. This would help me build a productive classroom that fits the students' unique needs and positively affirms the students' identities (de Jong, 2011), which is essential for conducting culturally responsive pedagogy (Gay, 2010). In my *SIOP lesson plan*, I constantly guided the students into meaningful conversations based on the content of the lesson with the facilitation of sentence stems. In the process of struggling to communicate, the students would learn and grasp English better (Brown, 2000). In the *Second Language Acquisition Assessment*, I evaluated the student's English language skills in pragmatics, phonology, grammar and semantics respectively as well as gave an overall assessment, which would be helpful for the backward design of future lessons (Wiggins & McTighe, 2012) and building a communicative language teaching

classroom in an "enlightened, eclectic" way (Brown, 2000, p. 40).

**Weaknesses in My Practice of the Teaching Philosophy**

As I read through the works that I have created, I noticed that my second strategy, *Incorporating L1 into English Language Classrooms*, is not lived out sufficiently. First, when I was planning lessons or curricula, although I have always had this idea in my mind, I usually merely touched upon it rather than made substantial use of it. For instance, I would include Chinese translation when introducing new vocabulary in the SIOP lesson plan; but I could have encouraged the students to use Mandarin to discuss their opinions prior to actually talking about "the trolley problem" in English. In my future teaching, since I envision myself to be teaching in China, a similar issue to students not conversing in Chinese enough will probably not exist – the problem will instead be how they view using Chinese in an English class, because many of them have been taught in a way that regards using any Chinese as unhelpful. Therefore, what I will need to do is to formally inform them of the reason why we are incorporating two languages in the class and how we should balance them to benefit our learning.

For another, when I was thinking about *incorporating L1 into English language classrooms*, I had always been picturing using it for my lesson delivery. However, in assessing students' language ability, this strategy could be essential too. In my past practice, I tend to only pay attention to students' language ability of English but ignore their L1 levels; as a matter of fact, for EFL students, their learning of English can largely depend on their knowledge of their L1, both linguistically and methodically (Carrasquillo, Kucer & Abrams, 2004). Therefore, in my future

teaching, I could put more effort into evaluating students' L1 level to inform instruction. For example, I could seek to collaborate with Chinese language teachers in the same school, obtain their perceptions on how well the students are mastering Chinese, and compare it with their English levels. If I see (in)consistency between the two, I could implement some interventions based on whether there is lack of interest or other issues.

**Challenges I Anticipate Experiencing in My Future Teaching Context**

Among my three key ideas that I have put forward for my future teaching, the third one, *Conducting Communicative Language Teaching*, appears to be most challenging in the following ways.

First, communicative language teaching usually requires the teacher-student ratio to be relatively high so that there could be enough interaction between the teacher and the students, and that the teacher would be able to constantly monitor the class. However, in China, due to the large population, usually the class size could be as large as 40 to 50 students per class, making it difficult to implement communicative language teaching. Honestly, the number of students in a class largely depends on the infrastructure and socioeconomic status of the target area, leaving me little space to change. However, I could anticipate the challenge easier if I work in an international high school where there are relatively fewer students, or an academy where there are more choices in terms of the class configuration.

Second, due to the profound impact of Confucianism, Chinese students tend to be more conservative and quieter during the lessons, believing that they should accumulate enough

knowledge before making use of it (Hu, 2005), which contrasts with how communicative language teaching works. Thus, there is a large chance that I would face the challenge of students refusing to talk or being engaged in active conversations. To tackle this problem, I plan to establish a trusting relationship with the students by sincerely caring for them and talking to them as a friend and teacher, hoping that they would feel comfortable enough to participate in the conversations; and thus make my classroom a safe place for them to be in, which is necessary if I want to conduct communicative language teaching.

Third, considering the washback effect of English tests in China, since those tests are largely grammar-based (Zhang & Wang, 2012), and the scores are closely relevant to whether students can be admitted into a decent tertiary education institute, the schools' administrators and students themselves may hold against the idea of incorporating communicative language teaching, believing grammar-translation a better way to pass those tests. I personally see solving this challenge as a revolutionary act, if successful. Therefore, I foresee working with one or two classes in lower grades as a start, because the mindsets of the students, parents and teachers there are likely to be more open since the "big test" is not so close yet, which makes them easier to accept the relatively novel teaching approach without fearing too much that this change would do harm to their English test scores. If I could prove that using communicative language teaching is just as useful, if not more than the traditional way of teaching in promising the students a good grade, there may be a chance that the administrators could see the advantage of this approach and then promote it. But to be honest, the administrators may not agree with "experimenting" with

communicative language teaching with lower graders in the first place if they are too conservative.

If this really is the case, I would try to communicate with my fellow teachers to try to further

change the situation. However, no matter how much I like this approach, I have to admit that not

all students will be open to the very method I will use and so, I will need to refine my own teaching

constantly based on the student needs to reach what makes the best results.

### Future Development

As TESOL Domain 8 states, "*Teachers continue to grow in their understanding of the relationship of second language teaching and learning to the community of English language teaching professionals, the broader teaching community, and communities at large, and use these understandings to inform and change themselves and these communities.*" I would not be able to continuously improve and refine my teaching skills without the connection to the teaching community. Therefore, in my future teaching career, I foresee myself working closely with my fellow teachers as well as frequently exchanging ideas with students' families to inform and adjust my teaching and education research. If conditions permit, I would attend teaching seminars or summits to communicate with teachers from various background as well. In order to make this possible, in my job hunting, I will consciously pay attention to the school culture in terms of whether they encourage collaboration between teachers, by asking them questions during my interviews, remembering that job hunting is always a two-way choice.

This teaching portfolio records how my beliefs in teaching English developed, and analyzes works that I have generated during my study at Vanderbilt University. It marks the end of an

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academic program, yet sets the beginning of my teaching career. In the future, I will be working

from what I have already gained and understood, and continuously building on and modifying it

to approach perfection in teaching.

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**Appendix**

**Artifact A**

**Community Literacy: Chinese in Nashville**

Cited in a study (Jiménez, Smith and Teague, 2009) concerning community literacy, Valenzuela (1999, p.115) put forward the idea that in order to show that the teachers care about the students, they have to make a start at completely understand students' academic as well as social milieu. No doubt, having a thorough understanding of students' background, or the community literacy is one way to help improve teachers' teaching efficiency, and build a more positive teacher-student trust relationship which "plays an important role in their school adjustment, academic motivation and performance" (Lee, 2007). Therefore, this study is conducted to collect factors of Chinese community literacy at Nashville to help classroom teachers know more about this group of students and also provide a few suggestions.

**General View**

Compared with other cities in the US, for example, New York and Chicago, respectively 573,388 and 43,228 Chinese in each city as shown in Google, there are much fewer Chinese people in Nashville. However, we ha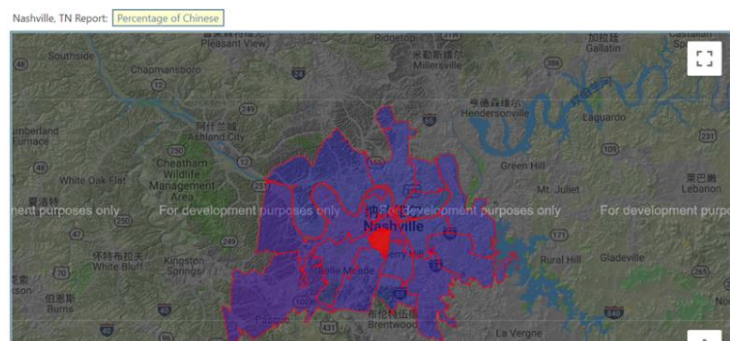ve to admit that the number has been increasing these years, influenced by the fact that many more Chinese students now choose to



Figure 1 (Retrieved from http://zipatlas.com/us/tn/nashville/zip-code-comparison/percentage-chinese-population.htm)

go abroad to study, and that there are a considerable number of Chinese people who decide to immigrate for other reasons as well. According to the website of Greater Nashville Chinese Association (GNCA, https://gncamembers.com/), "the Chinese population is estimated to be over 10,000 in the Greater Nashville area with several thousands of Chinese professionals working in Vanderbilt University and its affiliated Medical Centers as well as other universities, research institutions and multi-national corporations operating in the region." Chinese people have now reached 2.60% of the total population in Nashville, with the distribution shown in Figure 1. We see that generally, Chinese people in Nashville tend to assemble in one area, the center of the city, where Vanderbilt University is located. This distribution fact goes in line with what is show at GNCA website and it can thus be presumed that Chinese population in Nashville mainly consists of students as well as staff and faculties related to Vanderbilt University.

### Restaurants and Markets

For people who live abroad, food is an element that is embedded deeply in their mind. Various choices are provided in Nashville concerning this. Chinese restaurants such as Best Wok Chinese and Tansuo, are found scattered in the city, with rankings shown on different websites such as Google Map, Yelp and Trip Adviser, etc., which not only serve as places to eat for Chinese people, but also places where they can gather as a community to share their life and tradition. For example, Meet Noodles, a restaurant near Vanderbilt University, has been collaborating with Chinese students at VU, providing food for their gatherings or helping with order typical Chinese dim-sums and vegetables that are relatively hard to buy in Nashville. It also serves as an area where Chinese

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at Nashville can communicate with each other about their difficulties and experience.

Many Chinese at Nashville choose to cook for themselves as well. For this group of people,



Figure 2 Chinese food and seasoning at K & S World Market

K & S World Market and Fresh & Fresh International Market are two of the most popular places

where they shop. Different than American supermarkets such as Kroger and Target, these markets

are closer to supermarkets at China, both in goods and how they are arranged. A variety of Chinese

food, seasoning and utensils are served at these places with Chinese characters on the packings

(See Figure 2). These commodities are usually not what American families will consume, as a

result, most customers of such markets are of Asian origins.

## Organizations

During research, it is also found that in Nashville there are a few organizations that are aimed



Figure 3 Homepage of GNCA https://gncamembers.com/

at serving Chinese people, a representative one being Greater Nashville Chinese Association, which is a member-based non-profit organization representing the Chinese

community in the Middle Tennessee area founded in the year 1986. Currently on the homepage of

**Language Schools**

- Huizhong Chinese School
- the Nashville Chinese School
- Confucius Institute At Middle Tennessee State University

**Chinese Education and Culture Groups**

- Greater Nashville Chinese Association
- Vanderbilt University Chinese Students and Scholars Association
- Chinese Arts Alliance of Nashville
- VanDiva Dance Team
- Nashville Chinese Culture Club
- Little Eagle Chinese Dance Academy

**Chinese Church**

- The Chinese Congregation at Brentwood Baptist Church
- Middle Tennessee Chinese Church of Christ
- Nashville Chinese Baptist Church
- Crossroads of the Nations

Figure 4 Other organizations

the website, an event on Mid-autumn Festival, one of the most important traditional Chinese festivals is shown (See Figure 3). According to what is described on the website, the association regularly organizes gatherings for traditional Chinese festivals in Nashville, including but not limited to Dragon Boat Festival and Chinese New Year. On the website, a list of other organizations serving Chinese are also provided, including language schools, Chinese education and cultural groups and

Chinese churches (See Figure 4). There is news related to Chinese posted on the website as well.

Having these organizations in Nashville, it is reasonable to say that for either newcomers or old

residents who have Chinese origins, life is likely to be easier.

**Print Resources**

Through the field trip as well as my own research on Chinese community, I did not find many

Figure 5 Herald Monthly

newspapers or fliers in Chinese. The only one that I got was from a classmate who went to a Chinese church. "Herald Monthly" (See Figure 5) is a newspaper with Christian background provided freely for people who go to the church. In this particular newspaper, content is pretty

comprehensive, including family relationship, cooking, literature, news, health, education and

Christianity. A bunch of advertisements are included as well. For Chinese immigrants who cannot read English well, for example senior citizens, or those who just arrive in the US and are low in literacy, this is a good approach for them to know about what is happening around. However, considering the Christian background of the newspaper, it may be hard for those who do not go to church to have access to it.

## Immigrants' Views

Through conversations with two first-generation Chinese immigrants at Nashville, both of them tend to use Chinese within their families to talk to the children for the reason that they see Chinese language as representative of their identity. Being in a monolingual English environment, they are afraid of their children losing such sense of identity of being Chinese. Although I encountered these two immigrants under different situations, both of them first came to Nashville more than ten years ago, pursuing higher education at Vanderbilt University. In the past, they kept contact with other family members in China using phones or Facetime, but now they prefer to use WeChat as an alternative. In fact, their concern makes sense. An America Born Chinese who is the owner of Win Bubble Tea told us that although he was selling Chinese beverages, he could not speak Chinese nor had any interest in Chinese culture.

## Implications for Classroom Teachers

As classroom teachers of Chinese students at Nashville, we need to notify the similarity and diversity among this group.

For students who study English as an additional language, for example, immigrant children

who have acquired Chinese as the native language, considering the big distinction between Chinese and English, it is likely that these students may suffer from negative transfer from Chinese in both pronunciation and grammar, which may lead to their frustration during classes when they have trouble capturing all the instructions or expressing their ideas sufficiently. As teachers, we should notice the existence of such problems among students as soon as possible. Besides providing these students English language courses, we may also slow down our speaking speed a little and have eye contact with them more to make sure that they are catching up, which is also an action to soothe the students, making them feel that they are cared for rather than being left over by the mainstream. Also, if the teachers can have the basic knowledge of Chinese language structure, it would be possible for them to predict the mistakes students would make and give them special clarifications.

But having a background of another language may not be a bad thing for learning English. Students with the knowledge of two languages may have deeper understanding of meta-linguistic instructions. Teachers can thus make use of this and do some comparisons between Chinese and English to help students grasp the additional language.

The material that the teacher uses at class can also show cares for this group of students. For example, teacher can think about bringing traditional Chinese festivals into the classroom, letting students share about their own culture or even food from their country. The teachers can also use Chinese newspapers as a prompt to ask the students to talk about what is said on the newspapers and what is relevant to those issues in English language.

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When there are a large number of students who are in the same situation, the teachers can even consider bilingual education. According to the study by August, Goldenberg and Rueda (2010), they found out that the inclusion of primary-language instruction in second language education is a good approach to promote students' reading achievement. Therefore, the use of Chinese to make instructions at class when necessary is a good idea to improve students' study efficiency.

However, as teachers we should not have stereotypes on a special ethnic group of students. We have to be aware of the fact that there may be students who look like Chinese but in heart are not and have little interest in Chinese culture either, for example, the children of the bubble tea store owner may well be among this group. They may even do not need help with English course at all. Thus, it is very important that teachers have a thorough understanding of students' background before teaching. However, doing a research like this is far from enough to make the best of community literacy to help with classroom teaching. What teachers can actually do may be talking to students more and observing closely and try forming good relationships with students in order to know about students' needs.

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**Artifact B**

**Scope and Sequence of TOEFL Reading for 9th to 10th Grade Students**

Leqing Sun, Gaoyang Su

**<u>Introduction</u>**

This Scope and Sequence piece is meant for a TOEFL Reading course geared to the needs of 9th to 10th grade students in international schools in China. The goals, as we have discussed in the proposal, are that by the end of the course, the learners will hopefully be able to comprehend a large amount of rare and common words in the academic context; quickly understand and synthesize the big idea of a text, even though the language is complex and dense (Ets.org, 2020); attain some basic knowledge of subject content and cultural communication; and some ideas of which field they want to dedicate to in the future.   Specifically, we hope that they can get at least 22/30 in the reading section and for advanced learners, probably 25/30 or up. For the rest two goals, we are thinking about arranging a workshop and simulated interview by the end of the course.

In order to meet their needs better, at the beginning of the semester, a mock test of TOEFL reading (TPO-15) which is of medium hardness will be given to the students to see their currently English proficiency level. After this, a take-home test will be given to students every other week so that we can keep track of students' growth of English reading skills. Also, each week we plan to assign a topic-related vocabulary list to the students so that they can preview and memorize the spellings and meanings; and at the beginning of the next week there will be a dictation to check their vocabulary accumulation. Every three weeks, there will be an in-class test that includes all

the three topics.

After class, students are recommended to write down the words in their journal, annotating how to use them. They also have the option to write feedback in terms of difficulties they face during learning and suggestions for teachers in the journals. Teachers can accordingly give them instructions related to the proper use of words (Clementi & Terrill, 2017); plus, as a result, students can have considerable gains through active learning (Göker, 2006, pp. 190-191). Mobile apps such as Shanbei and Baicizhan are recommended by the teachers to better facilitate their vocabulary building, which goes in line with the principle of learner preferences and facilitates learner autonomy (Macalister & Nation, 2020, p.46; Kumaravadivelu, 1994, p.39). Students are supposed to turn in their journals at least 7 times per semester.

The units of progression of this curriculum will be covered in topics or themes such as geology, ecology, history, biology, etc. Generally, we are planning to have 3 45-min lessons of the same topic each week, counting as a unit. We are also trying to put related topics into two/three consecutive units to form a module (e.g., Geology and Ecology; Psychology and Education). According to Macalister and Nation (2020), teachability suggests that teachers should consider the most favorable sequence so that learners are most ready to acquire the knowledge. Therefore, we decide to teach TOEFL reading by topics, which can ease students' cognitive burden and help them learn in a systematic way. We are also trying to incorporate culture introduction into the curriculum because it is an indispensable part of a language (Van Lier, 2004).

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Mostly, 20-30 minutes of each lesson follows a similar format and the rest part will have some wiggle room for more creative tasks. By doing so, students can become more motivated and enthusiastic to participate and indirectly reduce misbehaviors (Wubbels, 2011). These creative tasks will require students to work collaboratively so that they can reach their highest potential (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011).

Another thing that stands out in our curriculum is that there is certain freedom given to the teachers who will use this in the future - because each class is unique and every individual may generate different outcomes and questions to the same material and homework, there will be some open time for teachers to deal with unanticipated questions during the class.

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## Week 1: Test Overview and Geology

Lesson 1: TOEFL Reading Overview

Content, Format, Technique, etc. (Refer to Official Guidance)

HOMEWORK:

1. Pre-test: Students will need to complete all the reading comprehension of TPO 15 within 60 mins. The teacher will use this as a material to see what levels the students are at.

2. Passage Annotating: Students will need to annotate one of the three passages they have completed in Lesson 1 by highlighting the new words, newly-encountered sentence structures, grammar, passage structures and main ideas. (Comments, thoughts, ideas optional) (These are suggested content to be included in the annotating, but students are not expected to do all of these by themselves in the beginning) Send the file to the teachers and also bring it to class.

3. Assign the TOEFL vocabulary list of Geology before class and have students preview the list. A few apps are suggested (Baicizhan, Shanbei, Quizlet, etc) to help Ss memorize the words.

4. Have students write down the words in their journal with examples of how to use them. (A personal dictionary)

Lesson 2: Geology Part I

Ss work in pairs and discuss the content of the annotation for 5 mins.

T talks about how to annotate new words and sentences.

T analyzes the content and organization of the article on Geology from TPO 15 ("Glacier Formation") for 15 mins.

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Ss complete 7 questions in another article on Geology in class within 10 min. (TPO-01 "Groundwater")

T analyzes the content and organization of the article for 15 mins and assigns the homework.

- Underline the unfamiliar words and discuss in class about the strategies to infer word meaning.

- Find the complex sentences in the article and have students analyze the syntax and tense.

- Introduce the structure of the article and conclude the main ideas.

HOMEWORK: 1. Complete the rest of the article. Complete another two articles on Geology (TPO-45 "Microscopes The Beringia Landscape", TPO-43 "The Origin of Petroleum).

2. Passage Annotating: Students will need to annotate one of the three passages they have completed in Lesson 1 by highlighting the new words, newly-encountered sentence structures (grammar, passage structures and main ideas, comments, thoughts, ideas optional) Send the file to the teachers and also bring it to class.

3. Review the vocabulary list.

4. Have students write down the words in their journal with examples of how to use them. (A personal dictionary)

Lesson 3: Geology Part II

Ss work in pairs and discuss the content of the annotation for 5 mins.

T talks about how to annotate grammar, passage structure and write main ideas.

T talks about one of the articles on Geology for 15 mins.

- Underline the unfamiliar words and discuss in class about the strategies to infer word meaning.

- Find the complex sentences in the article and have students analyze the syntax and tense.

- Introduce the structure of the article and conclude the main ideas.

Ss complete 7 questions in another article on Geology (TPO-49 "Ancient Coastlines") in class within 10 min.

Activity: Cause-effect chains. (For this one, see the word document "Example Activity").

T facilitates the students to analyze the article (the points below) and assigns the homework.

- Underline the unfamiliar words and discuss in class about the strategies to infer word meaning.

- Find the complex sentences in the article and have students analyze the syntax and tense.

- Introduce the structure of the article and conclude the main ideas.

HOMEWORK: 1. Complete the rest of the article. Complete another three articles (TPO-52 "Stream Deposit", TPO-35 "Earth's Age", TPO-27 "The Formation of Volcanic Islands").

2. Passage Annotating: Students will need to annotate one of the three passages they have completed in Lesson 2 by highlighting the new words, newly-encountered sentence structures, grammar, passage structures and main ideas. (Comments, thoughts, ideas optional) Send the file to the teachers and also bring it to class.

3. Review the Geology vocabulary list. Assign the Ecology vocabulary list.

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4. Have students write down the words in their journal with examples of how to use them. (A

personal dictionary)

**Week 2: Ecology**

Lesson 4 Review of Last Week and Ecology Part I

T helps Ss dictate frequently used words from the Geology word list. T provides the answer to the

students for them to self correct.

Ss work in pairs and discuss the content of the annotation for 5 mins.

T talks about one of the articles on Ecology for 15 mins.

- Underline the unfamiliar words and discuss in class about the strategies to infer word

  meaning.

- Find the complex sentences in the article and have students analyze the syntax and tense.

- Introduce the structure of the article and conclude the main ideas.

Ss complete 7 questions in another article on Ecology (TPO-29 "The History of Waterpower") in

class within 10 min.

Activity: The students are supposed to collaboratively create a timeline for the history of

waterpower according to the content of the article.

T facilitates the students to analyze the article briefly (the points below) and assigns the homework.

- Underline the unfamiliar words and discuss in class about the strategies to infer word

  meaning.

- Find the complex sentences in the article and have students analyze the syntax and tense.

- Introduce the structure of the article and conclude the main idea

HOMEWORK: 1. Complete the rest of the article. Complete another two articles (TPO-26 "Survival of Plants and Animals in Desert Conditions" TPO-10 "Variations in the Climate").

2. Passage Annotating: Students will need to annotate one of the four passages they have completed in Lesson 3. They can choose to highlight the new words, newly-encountered sentence structures, grammar, passage structures or main ideas as they need or write comments, thoughts or ideas about the article. Send the file to the teachers and also bring it to class.

3. Review the Ecology vocabulary list.

4. Have students write down the words in their journal with examples of how to use them. (A personal dictionary)

Lesson 5 Ecology Part II

Ss work in pairs and discuss the content of the annotation for 5 mins.

T talks about one of the articles on Ecology for 15 mins.

- Underline the unfamiliar words and discuss in class about the strategies to infer word meaning.

- Find the complex sentences in the article and have students analyze the syntax and tense.

- Introduce the structure of the article and conclude the main ideas.

Ss complete 7 questions in another article on Ecology (TPO-36 "Soil Formation") in class within 10 min.

T talks about the article for 15 mins (the points below) and assigns the homework.

- Underline the unfamiliar words and discuss in class about the strategies to infer word meaning.

- Find the complex sentences in the article and have students analyze the syntax and tense.

- Introduce the structure of the article and conclude the main idea

HOMEWORK: 1. Complete the rest of the article. Complete another two articles (TPO-31 "Savanna Formation", TPO-30 "The Invention of the Mechanical Clock").

2. Passage Annotating: Students will need to annotate one of the four passages they have completed in Lesson 4. They can choose to highlight the new words, newly-encountered sentence structures, grammar, passage structures or main ideas as they need or write comments, thoughts or ideas about the article. Send the file to the teachers and also bring it to class.

3. Review the Ecology vocabulary list.

4. Have students write down the words in their journal with examples of how to use them. (A personal dictionary)

Lesson 6 Ecology Part III

Ss work in pairs and discuss the content of the annotation for 5 mins.

T talks about one of the articles on Ecology for 15 mins.

- Underline the unfamiliar words and discuss in class about the strategies to infer word meaning.

- Find the complex sentences in the article and have students analyze the syntax and tense.

- Introduce the structure of the article and conclude the main ideas.

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Ss complete 7 questions in another article on Ecology (TPO-21 "Geothermal Energy") in class within 10 min.

Activity: Debate: Should we substitute petroleum with geothermal energy?

T talks about the article (the points below) and assigns the homework.

- Underline the unfamiliar words and discuss in class about the strategies to infer word meaning.

- Find the complex sentences in the article and have students analyze the syntax and tense.

- Introduce the structure of the article and conclude the main idea

HOMEWORK: 1. Complete the rest of the article. Complete another three articles (TPO-20 "Fossil Preservation", TPO-19 "Discovering the Ice Ages", TPO-7 "The Geologic History of Mediterranean") as a mock test. Ss are supposed to report the test results to the teacher.

2. Passage Annotating: Students will need to annotate one of the four passages they have completed in Lesson 5. They can choose to highlight the new words, newly-encountered sentence structures, grammar, passage structures or main ideas as they need or write comments, thoughts or ideas about the article. Send the file to the teachers and also bring it to class.

3. Review the Ecology vocabulary list. Assign the History vocabulary list.

4. Have students write down the words in their journal with examples of how to use them. (A personal dictionary)

**Week 3: History**

Lesson 7 Review of Last Week and   History Part I

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Before the class, have a dictation of vocabularies in archeology.

Turning and talking with a partner, discuss about the annotation and confusion they might have.

Leave students 15 mins to read the whole article. (TPO-40 "Ancient Athens")

T talks about one of the articles on History for 15 mins.

- Underline the unfamiliar words and discuss in class about the strategies to infer word meaning.

- Find the complex sentences in the article and have students analyze the syntax and tense.

- Show students some documentaries of Greek Civilization including politics, economy, and culture and have a discussion. Make inference of what this article might include.

- Analyze the structure of the article and conclude the main ideas.

Activity: Group discussion: After reading this article, have you learnt some new ideas about cultures of Athens? Choose one representative and report to the class.

HOMEWORK:

1. Complete the questions of the article. Complete another two articles (TPO-39 "The Extinction of Moa", TPO-37 "Thales and the Milesians").

2. Review the article we have learnt recently. Prepare to have the test by the end of this week.

4. Have students write down the words in their journal with examples of how to use them. (A personal dictionary)

5. Review the History vocabulary list.

Lesson 8 History Part II:

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Ss work in pairs and discuss the content of the annotation for 5 mins.

T talks about one of the articles on History for 15 mins. (TPO-39 "The Extinction of Moa")

- Underline the unfamiliar words and discuss in class about the strategies to infer word meaning.

- Find the complex sentences in the article and have students analyze the syntax and tense.

- Analyze the structure of the article and conclude the main ideas.

Activity: Show students some documentaries of Greek Civilization including politics, economy, and culture and have a discussion. Make inference of what this article might include.

Leave students 15 mins to read TPO-37 "Thales and the Milesians".

T talks about the article for 15 mins.

- Underline the unfamiliar words and discuss in class about the strategies to infer word meaning.

- Find the complex sentences in the article and have students analyze the syntax and tense.

- Introduce the structure of the article and conclude the main idea.

  Lead students to review the articles we've learnt recently. Leave 10 mins for Q&A session; students can ask any questions they are confused about.

HOMEWORK:

1. Review the articles and vocabularies. Be prepared for the test!

2. Review the vocabulary of Archeology.

Lesson 9 In Class Reading Test

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Students will take a test in class. We will include three articles relating to Geology, Ecology and

History to assess how students comprehend. The test will last for 60 mins.

**Week 4: Archeology**

Lesson 10   Review of Last Week and Archeology Part I

Lesson 11 Archeology Part II

Lesson 12 Archeology Part III

**Week 5: Education**

Lesson 13 Review of Last Week and Education Part I

Lesson 14 Education Part II

Lesson 15 Education Part III

**Week 6: Psychology**

Lesson 16   Review of Last Week and Psychology Part I

Lesson 17 Psychology Part II

Lesson 18 In Class Reading Test

**Week 7: Music and Art**

Lesson 19 Review of Last Week and Music and Art Part I

Lesson 20 Music and Art Part II

Lesson 21 Music and Art Part III

**Week 8: Biology**

Lesson 22 Review of Last Week and Biology Part I

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Lesson 23 Biology Part II

Lesson 24 Biology Part III

**Week 9: Environmental Science**

Lesson 25 Review of Last Week and Environmental Science Part I

Lesson 26 Environmental Science Part II

Lesson 27 In Class Reading Test

**Week 10: Astronomy and Wrap-up Workshop**

Lesson 28 Review of Last Week and Astronomy Part I

Lesson 29 Astronomy Part II

Lesson 30 Wrap-up Workshop

In the first 20 minutes, students are asked to discuss in groups about what they have learned in this semester - including their favorite topics/themes, the most interesting/impressive facts they have encountered, and the field(s) they want to dedicate to in the future, etc. During the rest time of the lesson, they are encouraged to share with the class about their ideas.

**Example Activity - Cause-Effect Chains (Approximately 20 min)**

T gives the students the handouts (see Appendix I ) with a few cause-effect chains on it.

Students are divided into eight groups (T gives each Ss a number from 1 to 8 in order and those who get the same number become a group). Each group contains three students and gets one handout.

T gives Ss 12 min to read the second paragraph ( see Appendix II ) and complete the cause-effect chains. While they are reading and discussing, T walks around the class to collect the common problems Ss have in vocabulary and write them on board.

T explains those unfamiliar words on the board.

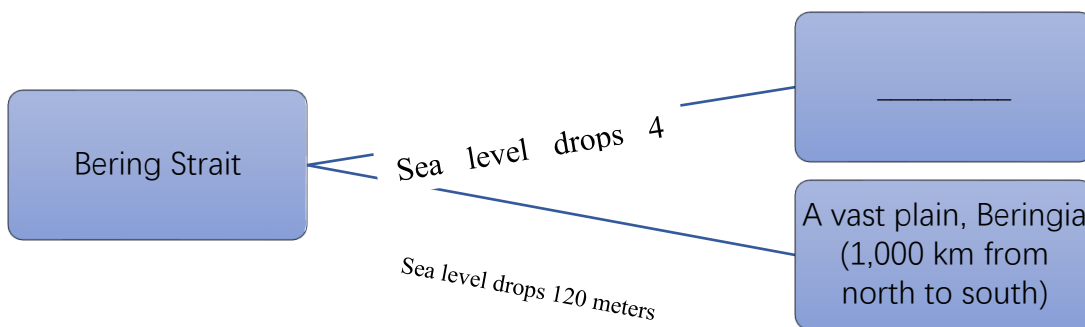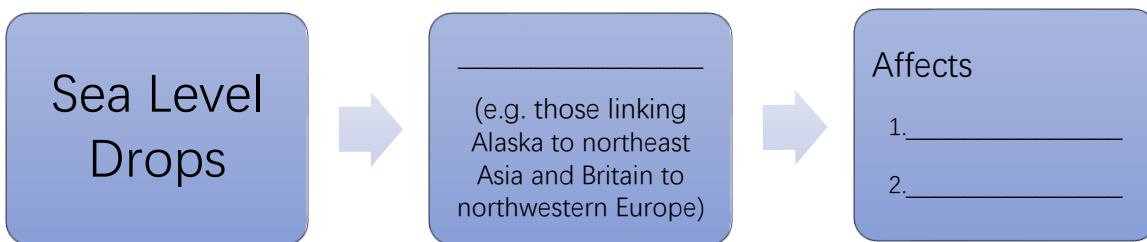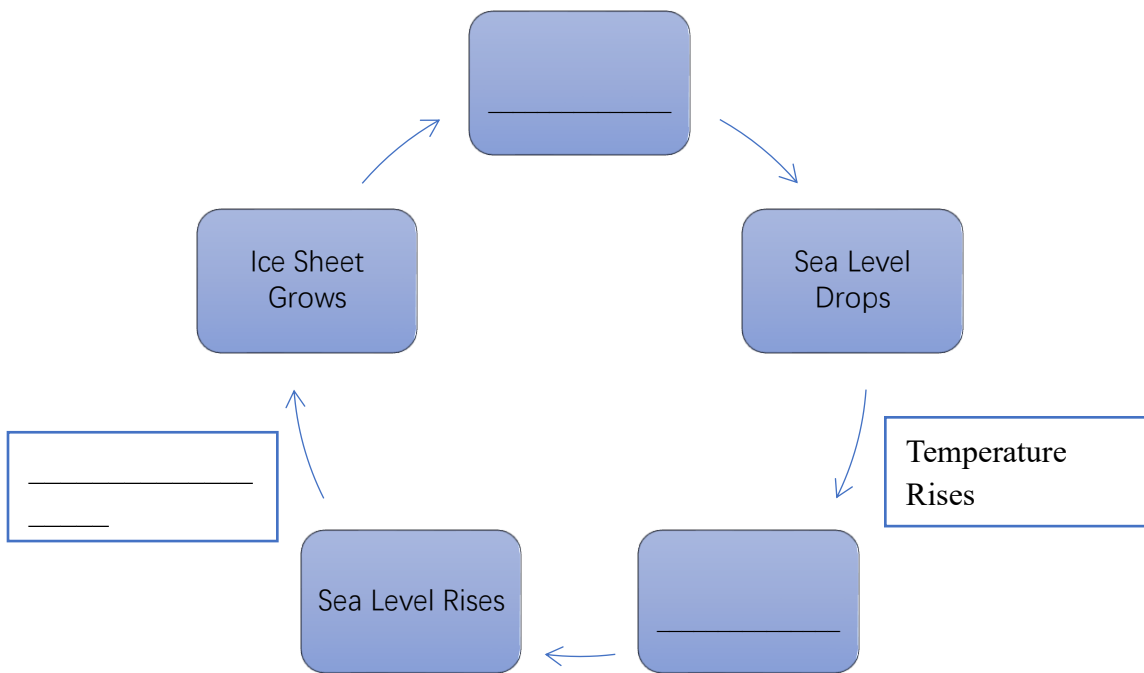T randomly picks one of the eight handouts (or choose one from the volunteers) and puts it under the projector to share with the whole class.

T helps Ss understand the cause-effect chains illustrated in this paragraph using this handout.

T shows Ss on slides the Bering Strait and how long is 1,000 km. (from Nashville to Washington D. C.)

T asks Ss if there is any content in this part they do not understand.

**Appendix I**

```
                        _____

        Ice Sheet                    Sea Level
         Grows                         Drops

                                              ┌──────────────┐
   ┌──────────────┐                           │ Temperature  │
   │ _____ │                           │ Rises        │
   │ ____         │        Sea Level          └──────────────┘
   └──────────────┘          Rises        _____
```

```
┌──────────────┐      ┌─────────────────┐      ┌──────────────┐
│              │      │ _____ │      │   Affects    │
│  Sea Level   │  →   │ (e.g. those     │  →   │              │
│   Drops      │      │ linking Alaska  │      │ 1._____ │
│              │      │ to northeast    │      │              │
│              │      │ Asia and Britain│      │ 2._____ │
│              │      │ to northwestern │      │              │
│              │      │ Europe)         │      │              │
└──────────────┘      └─────────────────┘      └──────────────┘
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                                          ┌──────────────┐
                                          │  _____    │
┌──────────────┐                          └──────────────┘
│ Bering Strait│ ← Sea  level  drops  4
│              │                          ┌──────────────┐
└──────────────┘      Sea level drops     │ A vast plain,│
                         120 meters       │   Beringia   │
                                          │ (1,000 km from│
                                          │ north to south)│
                                          └──────────────┘
```

Answers: Water locked up in the glaciers, temperature drops, ice melts, land bridges, human colonization of the globe, environment as a whole (the fauna and flora), a land bridge

**Appendix II**

Nevertheless, for archeologists concerned with the long periods of time of the Paleolithic period there are variations in coastlines of much greater <u>magnitude</u> to consider. The expansion and contraction of the continental glaciers **caused** huge and uneven rises and falls in sea levels worldwide. When the ice sheets grew, the sea level would drop as water became locked up in the glaciers; when the ice melted, the sea level would rise again. **Falls in sea level often exposed a number of important land bridges, such as those linking Alaska to northeast Asia and Britain to northwest Europe**, a phenomenon with far reaching effects not only on human colonization of the globe but also on the environment as a whole-the flora and fauna of isolated or insular areas were radically and often <u>irreversibly</u> affected. Between Alaska and Asia today lies the Bering Strait, which is so shallow that a fall in sea level of only four meters would turn it into a land bridge. When the ice sheets were at their greatest extent some 18,000 years ago (the glacier maximum), it is thought that the fall was about 120 meters, which therefore created not merely a bridge but a vast plain, 1,000 kilometers from the north to the south, which has been called Beringia. The existence of Beringia (and the extent to which it could have supported human life) is one of the crucial pieces of evidence in the continuing debate about the likely route and date of human colonization of the New World.

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## Artifact C

## Interview Report

Natalie (pseudonym) is currently a graduate student at the University of Edinburgh, who moved to the UK less than a year ago. She studied English Education at Soochow University in China when she was an undergraduate student and she is now studying in the M. Sc TESOL program. Therefore, to investigate the school context, educational, cultural and linguistic background of an international student in an English-speaking country, she would be an interesting interviewee. Also, since she and I share similar academic background, it is easier to discuss the questions from linguistic and metalinguistic perspectives. Besides, both being English language learners in a foreign country, studying her is also studying myself. This interview is based on a survey (see appendix) that I developed based on Gottlieb's and Herrera's articles, and basic information I had known about her as her college roommate. Since she and I are in different countries now, the interview took place on Zoom.

### Cultural, Experiential, Academic and Linguistic Background

Natalie was born in east China and Mandarin Chinese is her first language. Almost all of her content subject lessons before college were in Chinese, including English lessons. She speaks English as her second language and she also knows a little French, but she barely uses it in her daily life, either when she was in China or in the UK. She started to learn English since the first grade in primary school so till now she has known English for 17 years in total. She feels most comfortable using Chinese in general; but she enjoys talking to herself in English as well. She

admitted that sometimes using English in front of others made her nervous because she was afraid that she would make mistakes and thus others would not understand her. With her Chinese peers at the University of Edinburgh, she tends to use Chinese mixed with English when she does not know how to translate certain terms, which she considers as translanguaging.

Thinking about being taught English in China, what first occurred to her was the countless tests she had taken, behind which was test-oriented education she had received most of the time. However, she also mentioned that her parents once found a great English tutor for her in a private academy, who incorporated computer games into his classroom to engage all the students in the competition. In her opinion, this experience, along with a few other "highlight moments" where she got high scores in the tests or performed well during the class, and thus was praised by the teacher, which gave her a sense of achievement, made up her major motivation in learning English before college. She added that without considering all the tests that have made her a little scared of the English lessons, she personally feels English language very interesting and she likes the feeling of obtaining new knowledge. At home, she greatly enjoyed reading after the tapes of the textbooks and solving English riddles.

Looking back to her parents' opinions on English learning, she commented that they always considered English as a super important subject because it made up one-third of the score in most formal tests (the other two being Chinse and Mathematics). However, she does not believe that they regard learning English as a way of training or improving students' intelligence. As the only child of the family, her parents always attach much importance to her education.

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As far as she concerns, what is most important about English is how one can communicate with others effectively and to learn and understand English together with the culture behind it. She stressed that it is important to pay attention to the contexts in which the language is used so that the meaning can be fully understood. However, she holds the opinion that as long as one can be understood, neither accuracy nor fluency are essential. Here is an example: sometimes she thought she had done a horrible job in phrasing when she was talking to her classmates, but along with her body language and gestures, the other interlocutors could always understand her, which helped build on her confidence in speaking English.

About learning English, she believes that accumulation and practicing are both important. She thinks that forcing herself to generate more output helped her improve her English remarkably because she would be able to test and confirm her hypotheses of English language. I additionally asked her whether she has experienced a "silent period" when she first arrived in the UK but she denied. "I don't think I have ever had an absolute silent period. If any, there were probably up to three days when I didn't talk much." She said.

When asked about what she thought was "success" in learning English, she insisted that the idea was quite vague and that there was no ultimate success; but she hopes she can use English in a way that is as close to native speakers as possible. She especially mentioned that she had difficulty understanding English with strong accents; but as she observed, native speakers seem to be able to understand those fairly easily. Therefore, she hopes that one day she will be capable of doing this too.

In the TESOL program at the University of Edinburgh that she is currently studying in, among the approximately 300 students, as Natalie said, around 80% to 90% of the students are Chinese while the rest of them are from Canada, Australia and Japan, etc. Therefore, although she is in the UK now, she still uses Mandarin Chinese every day to communicate with her peers. She also frequently uses Chinese (Gaoyou Dialect, which sounds quite similar to Mandarin) to contact her family in China.

Looking back to her past one year in the UK, she mentioned how much she has missed Chinese food, convenient and fast online shopping and cheap but well-developed public transport, which resonated with my feelings. She kept talking about hotpot, homemade dumplings, Taobao, and those small restaurants near the back gate of her college. According to Natalie, besides her family and her boyfriend, these are what she has been missing most. She also complained a little about limited food choices the students are provided on campus. Although there are quite a few Chinese restaurants in Edinburgh, because usually they are fairly expensive, she preferred to save money by not going there too often. She would calculate in detail how much she has spent each month and make a plan for the coming month. However, she admitted that she did enjoy the milk and seafood in Edinburgh greatly.

## Educational Context

When she first arrived in Edinburgh, Chinese Students and Scholars Association organized a ten-day welcome week for all the Chinese students, which was enjoyable and helped her blend in local life and the university; however, after that she did not attend too many activities by them

because she "personally prefer(s) outdoor activities but they are always planning for indoor ones".

She sounded a little disappointed when she heard that I have experienced various welcoming activities arranged by various student organizations and the International Student & Scholar Services of Vanderbilt University. Although she felt that she had adjusted herself quite well, she still wished to have chance to celebrate some holidays with local families and know more about the Scottish culture. Nevertheless, she mentioned that the University of Edinburgh did organized an annual Christmas dinner, although she did not attend it because she was busy packing for going home.

To help international students whose first language is not English achieve academic goals, the University of Edinburgh provides Academic Writing course for the students but it is only available to students who the professors think need to be guided, which means if a proficient student want to get improved in English writing, they would not be approved. Although Natalie felt quite confident in her academic writing skills, she wished she could get to choose whether to enroll that course or not. In addition, she mentioned that she wished the university would provide a writing studio or similar services so that the international students can be helped and improved in academic writing more conveniently. However, she said that the professors always have high expectations for all the students, be them English speakers or not.

In the classes she has attended in the University of Edinburgh, the professors only use English; but since the majority of the students are international, they also allow students to use their first languages during discussion when necessary. However, she could always feel the indifference from

the professors in that few of them would ask the students about their cultural background, language, and needs, etc. "It could be me that is too sensitive but sometimes I could feel international students are implicitly discriminated by some of the professors and I could sense their vibe that they only regard their own culture as legit." Natalie added that the professors have taught countless international students, especially those from China, and that could be one of the reasons that they did not show much interest in the students' background. But as an outgoing girl, she is still willing to share her own culture, traditions and beliefs with her professors when there is chance, especially about what is very well developed in China. The only thing that she stressed to not want to talk about with others are topics that are relevant to politics, in that those could be rather sensitive and people who hold different opinions can easily start a quarrel. Another thing she has mentioned about her professors is that different than Chinese professors that she had in her undergraduate years, the professors at the University of Edinburgh only reply to her emails during work time, which has prevented her from asking more questions about her coursework.

As far as she has observed on campus, although the ethnic diversity is very obvious, people tend to use English most of the time and therefore, multilingualism is not a term that she would use to describe the norm in the university. She commented that because all the students who are admitted to the University of Edinburgh should be proficient in English, when people from various background come together, they tend to avoid using their non-English mother tongues; however, considering the large number of Chinese students there, Chinese could still be easily heard on campus. She also mentioned that Chinese students liked to stick together and many of them did

not enjoy interacting with people from other background as much, probably because Chinese people tend to be more reserved.

Thinking about the university as a whole, according to her past experience, on a 1 to 5 scale where 1 means minimum relevance, she gave a 2 to "students' languages and cultures are valued every minute of every day"; a 1 to "linguistic and cultural responsiveness is part of the school's and district's mission and vision"; and another 1 to "curriculum, instruction, and assessment invite multiple perspectives and reflect the identities of the students". She commented that either in class or on campus, she did not feel international students as a group has made much difference to the school life, lesson content, class design, etc. She said that all the professors that have given her lessons seem to have a set mode of how it should be going on and what subjects and examples should be used during certain parts. Although sometimes they would incorporate examples from China to illustrate certain theories, they almost never make linkage between class content and students' individual identities; nor do they often ask students to share their own experience as a second language learner of English.

## Rationale and Findings

Although the interviewee used to be my college roommate back in China, I tried to envision myself as a future English language teacher of hers when I was designing this interview. I read through Gottlieb's and Herrera's articles on assessing an EL student's academic, experiential, cultural and linguistic background and school context, and put myself in a would-be teacher's shoes to think about what information I would be needing if I want to give a lesson that meets the

needs of students and be responsive to students' cultural identities and experience. Therefore, besides asking about her basic information such as her preferential languages, learning style and experience, family status, demographics of current university, professors' teaching method, general school context, etc., I also asked about her opinions on how she thinks an ideal English lesson should be like and what she thought should be added in the university to help international students blend in, given that she has the expertise in TESOL. I shared some of my own experience to stimulate her memories as well.

Based on this interview that I have conducted with her, I found that Natalie is quite confident in expressing herself in English, although the majority of English education she has received were test-oriented and thus focused more on reading and writing; also she desires to learn about the culture behind a language and shows great interest in going into a local family to more closely experience the culture. As an English learner, she loves competition and games in class because so that she can be fully engaged and motivated. In the University of Edinburgh, based on her comments, despite the large number of international students, accommodation for them are not very complete and not all the professors value international students, or multiculturalism or multilingualism as an asset of learning.

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## Appendix – the Semi-structured Interview (Questions)

1.  When did you start to learn English?

2.  Back in China, what do you remember most distinctly in terms of being taught English?

3.  Do you think the approach(es) that your teacher used benefited you in learning English?

4.  Would you make any changes to the teaching approach(es) you have experienced if you had chance? If so, what would it be?

5.  How much do you enjoy the English classes in general?

6.  What elements in an English class attract you most?

7.  What are your parents' opinions about English learning?

8.  Are there anything that they have done to help you learn English? Any other comments?

9.  What is the language that you feel most comfortable to use in general? In class? At dorm? At home?

10. Where do you feel comfortable using English?

11. Any fun facts about you using English?

12. What do you think is the most important about English?

13. What do you think is the most important about learning English?

14. What is success to you in terms of English language learning?

15. What do you think is the motivation for you to learn English?

16. Since you arrived in the UK, how often do you use Chinese in your life?

17. Who do you use Chinese to contact usually?

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18. What do you miss most about China since you arrived in the UK?

19. What is the biggest adjustment you have made or the biggest change you have had since you moved to the UK?

20. Are there any cultural beliefs that are especially important to you?

21. What are some holidays or food that you enjoy most in the UK? In general?

22. Does the university encourage students to learn about and celebrate the holidays of multiple cultures?

23. Are there any other languages that you speak? Who do you use that/those with?

24. Have you received any type of support to help you blend in the new culture within the university? If so, what was that?

25. Have you received any type of language support to help you fulfill the requirements of academic goals? If so, what was that like?

26. What language(s) do professors use in the university?

27. Is English-only mandated in your classes? Do your professors allow the use of students' L1 in class?

28. Do you think the university and professors view students from various background as an asset?

29. How do you feel like your professors understand you? Are they interested in your culture and belief? Do they value your culture and belief?

30. How comfortable do you feel about sharing your culture with your professors and peers?

31. What are some challenges or difficulties that you have in the university?

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32. What are some challenges or difficulties that you have in the UK?

33. Do your professors have high expectations for you? Do you feel the expectations are same as native students?

34. Would you say multilingualism and multiculturalism is remarkable in the university?

35. In a 1-5 scale, how would you respond to the statement "students' languages and cultures are valued every minute of every day"?

36. In a 1-5 scale, how would you respond to the statement "linguistic and cultural responsiveness is part of the school's and district's mission and vision"?

37. In a 1-5 scale, how would you respond to the statement "curriculum, instruction, and assessment invite multiple perspectives and reflect the identities of the students"?

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## Artifact D

**Lesson Title:** What is fair?

**Standards:** Common Core State Standard Reading Standards for Informational Texts for 9th grade students (There are quite a few international schools in China are using the US standards but I consider it might be a little challenging for the students to use the same grade-level text, thus I chose a 9th grade text for 10th grade students.)

**Content Objective:** By the end of this lesson, the students will be able to 1) Describe what fairness means to them, 2) Explain whether or not there is absolute fairness and state the reasons, 3) Summarize the author's idea about how to deal with the ubiquitous unfairness in life and make comments based on their own decision. [Only 1) and 2) will be achieved in the first lesson; 3) is for the second one.]

**Language Objective:** By the end of this lesson, the students will be able to 1) Express opinions from other people's perspective using subjunctive mood, 2) Show agree- or disagreement to others' ideas with justifications, 3) Retell and summarize other people's opinions using indirect speech, 4) Analyze how the author developed his argument in a persuasive way, 5) Explain some of the rhetorical skills the author used to make his argument strong. [Only 1), 2) and 3) will be achieved in the first lesson; 4) and 5) is for the second one.]

**Theme:** Critically thinking about "what is fair", a question that we frequently confront in our lives; and learning to form a healthy mindset about it.

**Materials needed:** An excerpt from "Life isn't Fair – Deal with it" by Mike Myatt (see Appendix

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1), retrieved from CommonLit: https://www.commonlit.org/en/texts/life-isn-t-fair-deal-with-it.

Padlet: https://padlet.com/leqingsun9/xce3b4pbryq63oix. Laptop/iPad/Cellphone. Slides. Two

pictures (see Appendix 2, retrieved from theconversation.com)

**Grade and students:** 10th grade EFL students in an international high school in China

**Time duration:** 50 min

**Other preparation required:** The students are required to read through the passage at least once

before class. The students are supposed to print the passage out before the class.

**Additional notes:** 1) This lesson is prepared for online teaching but can also be adapted to in-

person class. 2) The text prepared is meant for two lessons and this lesson will only cover part of

the text reading because of the activity to initiate students' active thinking. 3) The first content

objective is applicable for both lessons and I expect the students to compare their ideas after the

whole text analysis with their ideas in the first lesson. 4) For the random breakout rooms, if the

teacher actually knows clearly about the students' ELP levels and the time permits, it is preferable

if the students can be paired up in a more-proficient/less-proficient way so that the lesson could be

more peer-scaffolding and fit the needs of multi-leveled students.

| Stage & Time | Purpose | Interactional Focus | Procedures |
|---|---|---|---|
| Introduction to the topic and goals | To ensure that the students have a clear idea about the goals of | Teacher (T) → Students (Ss) | T tells the students that we are going to explore and discuss "fairness". T shows the content and language |

| 2 min | the class, i.e. what they are going to obtain after class and why they are doing all the tasks in class. | | objectives on the slides to the Ss. T reads through all the objectives. T answers the Ss' questions to the objectives if there are any. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Warm-up Activity 20 min | To attract Ss' interests, activate their background knowledge, review and practice the language structure that they have learned previously in a meaningful setting. | Individual, Small groups | T shows the Ss the picture of "The Trolley Problem" (see Appendix 2). New words in the picture with Chinese translation are marked at the side of the picture to make sure the students with lower ELP can understand the context and have the language to talk about the question. T describes the picture, gives 30 seconds for the Ss to read the text on it and asks the Ss what they would do if they were the one who could divert the tram. T selects one S to talk about their |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | opinion and reasons. |
| | | | T makes comments to the S's answer and then shows a relevant picture "The footbridge dilemma" (see Appendix 2) to the students. New words in the picture with Chinese translation are marked at the side of the picture to make sure the students with lower ELP can understand the context and have the language to talk about the question. |
| | | | T gives 30 seconds for the Ss to read the text on it and asks the Ss what they would do if they were the person who could choose to push down the large man to stop the tram. |
| | | | T selects one S to talk about their opinion and reasons. |
| | | | T divides the whole class into four |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | random breakout rooms to discuss. T assigns "The Trolley Problem" to the first two groups and "The Footbridge Dilemma" the other two groups. Before starting the discussion, T reiterate the basic structure of subjunctive mood, indirect speech, etc. and tell the Ss these are available on the Padlet website as well. T shows the Ss a slide with basic protocols they should follow such as respect and pay attention to others' answers, make friendly comments, etc. T ensures the Ss know they have 10 min to discuss. T provides the link to Padlet where the students need to take notes. There are also a few templates (e.g., If I were __, I would ___.) provided in |

| | | | the Padlet page for the students to refer to. The Ss are also encouraged to add to the templates if they have found some useful structures. |
| | | | T shifts through different rooms to see how the students are doing and answers any questions that they have. |
| | | | T brings the Ss back to the main room and asks each group to have one representative to report to the class their discussion. T comments. |
| | | | T concludes the main idea of the discussion and further informs the students of the topic of the lesson. |
| Pre-reading Discussion 6 min | To make linkage between students' past experience and the content objectives, lead the students to | T → Ss, Individual | T asks the Ss to put themselves into the shoes of other people in the two pictures. "Suppose a decision has been made and you were that large guy, or one of the workers on the |

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|---|---|---|---|
| | think from different perspectives | | track… what would you feel about what would happen to you? Do you think it is fair? What is fair exactly?" After the Ss has answered the previous questions, T asks the Ss to think about their own experience and whether they have been treated unfairly. T select 2-3 students to talk about their experience. |
| Reading Analysis 20 min | To guide the students to know about the main idea of the passage | T → Ss, Pairs, Individuals | T asks the Ss to take out the passage and underline the sentence "Some of the 99% seem to believe life has treated them unfairly, and some of the 1% feel life hasn't treated them fairly enough." in the first paragraph. T asks the Ss the following questions: Who are the 99%? Who are the 1%? What is the biggest |

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| | | | difference between them? What are the similarities? Why is that? Who can you relate yourself to? |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | T asks the Ss to think to themselves for 1 min and take some notes; T asks the Ss if there is any confusion about the tasks and then divides them into random breakout rooms of two to discuss for three minutes. |
| | | | T asks three pairs to report to the class what they have found. |
| | | | T concludes the main idea of the first paragraph: Life isn't fair, no matter who you are. |
| | | | T asks the Ss to the highlighted sentence "I have long believed that while we have no control over the beginning of our life, the overwhelming majority of us have |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | the ability to influence the outcomes we attain." |
| | | | T selects a S (or ask for a volunteer) to read this sentence. T corrects the student's pronunciation if there are any mistakes. T asks the Ss if there are any words they do not know. |
| | | | T talks about the meanings of "overwhelming majority", "attain" along with any other words the Ss do not know. |
| | | | T asks the Ss to think of what the "while" here means by thinking about the relation between the two sections of the sentence. |
| | | | T asks the Ss the following questions: What does the author believe we cannot control? What we can control? What does he mean by |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | "the beginning of our life"? What are some examples of "the outcomes we attain"?<br><br>T gives the Ss 1 min to think on their own, take some notes and then put them into breakout rooms to discuss in pairs for three minutes.<br><br>T brings them back to the main room and choose three pairs to report to the class what they have found.<br><br>T asks the Ss to underline the sentence "<u>Fair is a state of mind, and most often, an unhealthy state of mind.</u>"<br><br>T asks the Ss to take out their notebook and write a few sentences about: Based on what we have read, why do you think the author believes so? The Ss can either write in English |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | or Chinese, based on their ELP levels. What they have written down will become the material for the beginning discussion of the next lesson. |
| Summary 2 min | To guide the students to revisit what has been covered in this lesson | T → Ss | T briefly talks about what the students has learned by checking all the objectives. |

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## Rationale

Different from language drilling where the language is usually used without a real-life purpose, the lesson I have designed requires and encourages the students to communicate meaningfully using the language structures that they have learned previously to fulfill certain purposes. Brown (2000) argued that in CLT, the learners are encouraged to communicate in a clear and accurate way instead of only to speak English "fluently"; Rao (2002) also suggested that, CLT does not exclude the teaching of grammar and we should view grammar as a tool or a resource to be used instead of the ultimate goal of language learning. Therefore, I planned the lesson in a way that the students will be asked to make use of the syntactic knowledge they have learned to express their opinions, negotiate with others and report to the class. Also, the scaffolding of this lesson largely depends on students' reactions and their past experience, which goes in line with Brown's (2000) idea that the designing of a lesson using CLT approach should be based on the synthesis of contextual factors, classroom observation, pedagogical theories and CLT principles.

Echevarría, Vogt and Short (2017) mentioned that at some point of the lesson the objectives should be explicitly informed of the students so that they would have a clear idea about what the teachers want them to learn and pay special attention to. Therefore, considering all the activities that I planned for this lesson are more or less relevant, the objectives are addressed clearly to the students at the beginning of the lesson. Also, by the end of the lesson, I plan to check on each of the objectives with the students so that they would know how much they have achieved, this goes consistently with the purpose of stating objectives to them at the beginning. When planning for the

objectives, I used words such as "describe", "retell" and "summarize" because Echevarría, Vogt and Short (2017) stressed the importance of using active verbs in writing content and language objectives to avoid the obscurity caused by vague words such as "learn" and "know" because they cannot be easily observed. Based on Celce-Murcia, Dörnyei and Thurrell's (1995) taxonomy, actional and linguistic strategies will be developed through this lesson because the students are expected to express opinions, negotiate with and persuade peers using syntactical knowledge they have learned.

Since the higher-order thinking objectives of this lesson are to have the students critically think about fairness, to consider a question from different perspectives and to realize the importance of agency in go around or overcome the challenges, the lesson starts with the trolley problem and the footbridge dilemma so that the students can bring themselves into the situation and analyze what is the best decision they can make, which automatically leads them to think about what is fair. Then the students are required to think themselves as other characters in the same situations, and think of their own experience where they believe to have been treated unfairly, which goes in line with the first paragraph which talks about the ubiquity of unfairness. Next the analysis of the text gradually informs the students of a healthier mindset, that is to try solving the problem by making the best of one's agency. In the process, the students were not simply given the information, but rather, they experienced and reasoned to reach a consensus with others, with content and academic language embedded in.

This lesson is designed to be largely based on the students' past experience and personal and

negotiated decisions. As Echevarría, Vogt and Short (2017) have suggested, all the new language input is structured to be integrated with information they have previously acquired. Many small group/pair discussions and individual pondering are incorporated in the process including the warm-up activity and reading analysis, which encourages and guides the students to activate their background knowledge, for example, to determine what they would do if they were the person in the picture. How one would make a decision is usually influenced by what that have seen people around them do or principles and theories they have learned before. Also, because the memory or experience they have retrieved in the warm-up activity is closely related to the content of the consequent text analysis, necessary background knowledge is likely to be bridged and built. Besides, since the students are encouraged to use the syntactic structures they have learned previously and visual aids are provided to help them activate the memory, background knowledge are more easily used.

From the start of the lesson, the students are involved in a discussion that is relevant to the topic of the lesson and the main idea of the text that is going to be analyzed. Since the text chosen is challenging to the students, it might be too threatening for them if the teacher directly asks them to read and comprehend it. SIOP model suggests that the teachers should activate students' background knowledge and make linkage between old and new knowledge (Echevarría, Vogt & Short, 2017). If a lesson is started with problems that the students can solve based on their past experience, their interest will be aroused and their confidence will be built. When talking about teaching complex text, Wong-Fillmore and Fillmore (2012) put forward the idea that the teacher

can ask a series of questions to help students seek out important information from a long sentence

and think about the inner logistic relationships and so I designed a series of questions related to

the content of the complex sentences. A potential differentiation could be asking more proficient

peers to ask those questions instead, to build a peer-scaffolding lesson.

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## Appendix 1 – Handout
## Life Isn't Fair — Deal with It (Abridged)
## By Mike Myatt

[1]   There seems to be a lot of talk these days about what is fair, and what is not. President Obama seems to believe life should be fair — that "everybody should have a fair shake." Some of the 99% seem to believe life has treated them unfairly, and some of the 1% feel life hasn't treated them fairly enough. My questions are these: What is fair? Is life fair? Should life be fair? I'll frame the debate, and you decide⋯

[2]   We clearly have no choice about how we come into this world, we have little choice early in life, but as we grow older choices abound. ==I have long believed that while we have no control over the beginning of our life, the overwhelming majority of us have the ability to influence the outcomes we attain.== Fair is a state of mind, and most often, an unhealthy state of mind.

[3]   In business, in politics, and in life, most of us are beneficiaries of the outcomes we have contributed to. Our station in life cannot, or at least should not, be blamed on our parents, our teachers, our pastors, our government, or our society — it's largely based on the choices we make, and the attitudes we adopt.

[4]   People have overcome poverty, drug addiction, incarceration, abuse, divorce, mental illness, victimization, and virtually every challenge known to man. Life is full of examples of the uneducated, the mentally and physically challenged, people born into war-torn impoverished backgrounds, who could have complained about life being unfair, but who instead chose a different path — they chose to overcome the odds and to leave the world better than they found it. Regardless of the challenges they faced, they had the character to choose contribution over complaint.

[5]   I don't dispute that challenges exist. I don't even dispute that many have an uphill battle due to the severity of the challenges they face. What I vehemently dispute is attempting to regulate, adjudicate, or legislate fairness somehow solves the world's problems. Mandates don't create fairness, but people's desire and determination can work around or overcome most life challenges.

[6]   It doesn't matter whether you are born with a silver spoon, plastic spoon, or no spoon at all. It's not the circumstances by which you come into this world, but what you make of them once you arrive that matter. One of my clients came to this country from Africa in his late teens, barely spoke the language, drove a cab while working his way through college, and is now the president of a large technology services firm. Stories such as this are all around us — they are not miracles, nor are they the rare exception. They do however demonstrate blindness to the mindset of the fairness doctrine.

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[7] From a leadership perspective, it's a leader's obligation to do the right thing, regardless of whether or not it's perceived as the fair thing. When leaders attempt to navigate the slippery slope of fairness, they will find themselves arbiter of public opinion and hostage to the politically correct. Fair isn't a standard to be imposed unless a leader is attempting to impose mediocrity. Fair blends to a norm, and in doing so, it limits, inhibits, stifles, and restricts, all under the guise of balance and equality. I believe fair only exists as a rationalization or justification.

[8] …

[9] Here's the thing — we all face challenges, and life treats us all unfairly. We all make regrettable choices, and we all suffer from things thrust upon us due to little if any fault of our own. When I suffered a debilitating stroke at an early age, I certainly asked myself "why did this happen to me?" I could have felt sorry for myself and became bitter, I could have thrown in the towel and quit on my family and myself — I didn't. It took two years of gut-wrenching effort, but what I thought was a great injustice at the time changed my life for the better. Today, you couldn't tell I ever had a stroke. The greatest adversity life can throw at you simply affords you an opportunity to make changes, improve, and get better.

[10] By the title of today's column, you have no doubt surmised I believe life is not fair, nor do I believe we should attempt to socially or financially engineer it to be such. Fair is not an objective term — it is a matter of perspective filtered by a subjective assessment. My subjective assessment is that fair is an entitlement concept manufactured to appease those who somehow feel slighted. Life isn't fair — #occupyreality

**Note:** The "99%" refers to income inequality and wealth distribution between the wealthiest 1% and the rest of the American population. In September 2011, demonstrators protesting greed and corruption among corporations, financial institutions, and politicians gathered in Zuccotti Park, located in New York City's Wall Street financial district. They began a movement known as "Occupy Wall Street," intended to draw attention to the massive divide of wealth in the United States. According to economist Joseph Stiglitz, "In our democracy, 1% of the people take nearly a quarter of the nation's income.… In terms of wealth rather than income, the top 1% control 40%."

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**Appendix 2**



The trolley problem

The person can choose to divert the tram from the main track, saving five people on the track, but killing the worker on the other track.

theconversation.com    Images adapted from shutterstock.com



The footbridge dilemma

The person on the bridge can choose to push the large person onto the track, thereby killing that person but potentially stopping the tram and saving the five people further down the track.

theconversation.com    Images adapted from shutterstock.com

**Artifact E**

**I. Introduction of Context**

Yujia Teng is a twenty-year old Chinese student who was born in Nanjing, Jiangsu Province. His native language is Chinese but he started to learn English when he was six years old, in the first grade of primary school. He is an undergraduate student at Soochow University. However, he is currently at the University of California – Berkeley as an exchange student in the Physics program for his junior year. I first met him because we had the same TOEFL speaking teacher in China, and we were in the same university for undergraduate study.

The material that is used for the analyses contains two types, written and oral. The written material is an excerpt from his homework for Quantum Mechanics. The oral material is from an online interview through WeChat voice call.

Before the interview, Yujia was informed of the purpose of this interview and that the process would be recorded. During the interview, he was first asked to talk about casual topics that is relevant to his life, personal information and English learning experience, and second, a few simulated situations of conversations that were designed to see how he would use the language under various circumstances were provided to him.

For the first part of conversation, given the fact that the I have known Yujia for two years, there is a social context where I may be able to detect when he happened to make a mistake during speaking. For example, see the cited conversation below:

Q: How long have you been learning English?

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A: It's… it's about twelve… twelve years… maybe.

Q: Twelve years. Okay, that's a long time. So that's when you are… in what age? Like, or what grade were you in when you first started to learn English?

A: When I first to learn English… I remember that it's in my… about… first or second year in my primary school.

Q: First or second year in your primary school! And now you are in twelfth grade? No, but you are not in the twelfth grade so you have learned English for more than twelve years. It should be like fourteen years. I think.

A: I think… Yes, yes, maybe.

Since I know clearly that Yujia is now in the third year of his undergraduate study, it is unlikely that he started to learn English in the first grade but has only learned English for twelve years.

Considering the nature of the two types of material, the oral tends to be more casual and social while the written tends to be more formal and academic.

In this paper, I will first give an overall assessment on Yujia's English proficiency level based on Common European Framework of Reference for Languages and WIDA. Then, four analyses on different aspects, namely pragmatics, phonology, grammar and semantics will be conducted. After that, corresponding instructional recommendations will be given based on the results of the analyses. In the end, I will summarize the study and state the implication for my future teaching.

**II. Overall Language Assessment**

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Yujia speaks English as a second language. Referring to Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, his speaking ability falls into somewhere between B2 (independent user) and C1 (proficient user), the rationale being that during the interview, most of time he could fluently answer or interact with me with little hesitation. When he was uncertain about my questions, he would ask for clarification. See the example below.

Q: Can you describe a typical English class in your home country? For example, in middle school or in elementary school. You can choose whatever you like… to describe a typical English class.

A: Describe the difficulty in a class?

Q: I mean, to describe a typical English class. Like how do you have lessons in China, either in your elementary or middle school or whatever else kind of degree you'd like to describe.

A: In my middle school, my English classes are always made us to… uh… first the teacher let us to read the text… textbook together. And the teachers teach… uh, taught us many grammars or new words and we need to mem… memorize them. And we do this is… we prepare for the exams. But after the class I surely … (?) have not learnt much oral English ability.

However, as also demonstrated in the example above, sometimes he struggled with finding suitable words or phrases for expressing the ideas. Also, in the description, he lacked a sense of logic and structure. This phenomenon did not happen frequently though.

In terms of grammatical ability, generally speaking, he did better in writing than in speaking. Using the rubric of WIDA, his writing ability is at Level 4 "expanding" while his speaking ability is at Level 3 "developing" in that there are much fewer grammatical mistakes and more diversified vocabulary in writing than in speaking. Therefore, his grammatical ability should be somewhere between Level 3 and level 4. In his speaking, sometimes he would use sentences with incomplete structure like "So, I would suggest… you can choose another gift to buy for your girlfriend." or with grammatical mistakes such as lack of articles ("that's better solution"), wrong collocation ("spend money to do") or lack of prepositions ("part their fees"). However, in his writing, I could only identify one grammatical mistake which is "quanta is".

### III. Pragmatic Analysis

Generally speaking, Yujia effectively took turns during the conversation and filled pauses and he adhered to Grice's maxims (Yule, 2017, p. 164) (i.e. maxim of quantity, maxim of quality, maxim of relation and maxim of manner) quite well.

The maxim of quantity requires that the speaker makes the contribution as informative as required (Yule, 2017, p.164). In the conversation, Yujia stuck strictly to the questions that I asked and provided all the information that I needed. However, at some points he might have said too much about a topic. See an example below:

Q: OK so… usually when do you speak your native language and with whom do you speak that?

A: I often speak in my dormitory with my… hmm friends. They (are) all from the same

program with me.

Q: Oh, so they are all Chinese…

A: But when I… Yes. They are all Chinese. And when I talk to the professor or the friends

in Berkeley, I just speak English… speak English.

This conversation happened during the first part of the interview and this is more like a casual

talk which means the interlocutors have the same power status. When I asked about where and

with whom he spoke Chinese, he not only answered the question per se, but he also added

information like he spoke to his professor in English, which is redundant.

The maxim of quality requires the speaker to say things that s/he believes and avoid what s/he

lacks enough evidence (Yule, 2017, p.164). From my observation and what I have known about

Yujia, he strictly obeyed this maxim. For example, in the casual talking part I asked about how he

would perceive his English language ability and he answered:

"My English language ability… I think… my oral communication may not be too well.

But my ability to read… read something is… I think it's pretty enough to… hmmm… to

help me finish something."

Through the conversation, I noticed that although he spoke with hesitation and sometimes

with obscurity, he in most situations had no difficulty understanding what I asked or commented

on and was able to further clarify what was unclear when asked.

The maxim of relation requires the speaker to be relevant (Yule, 2017, p.164). Yujia had little

problem with this maxim. Almost all the information he provided in the conversation was closely

related to the topics which were guided and manipulated by the interviewer. He barely showed

intent of driving the conversation to a different direction except for one of the answers that he gave

me where he provided his own view about the influence of English classes in China when I was

only asking him to describe a lesson.

The maxim of manner requires that the speaker be clear, brief and orderly (Yule, 2017, p.164).

Generally, he answered the questions briefly and in a good order. However, there are some cases

where he could not say things clearly enough due to lack of vocabulary. For instance, when he was

talking about his reading ability as cited above, he used quite a few redundant structures. He did

pretty well in terms of politeness, though. In the role-play part where he had to refuse a professor's

offer of PhD, he said "Oh, thank you, thank you, professor. I really want to get that PhD. But I

think that is a little far away from me and I don't want to move to that place.", which expressed

his idea clearly and also ensured that he was using good manners.

Then what impacts his pragmatic performance in the interview? Yujia had K-12 and first two

years of college education in China and started to learn English when he was in the first grade of

primary school but mostly only for test-oriented purposes. Also, being a Physics major, he has had

few chances to learn English after entering college, except when he was taking classes for TOEFL.

However, since he has lived in the US for over a month, he should have known more about how

to maintain a conversation although he may have little idea about pragmatics.

I have known Yujia for more than two years, so technically, this conversation should have

been a relatively casual one. But since we share the first language and thus normally, we do not

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talk in English, he appeared unnatural. Considering the competence vs. performance theory by

Chomsky (1965), it is likely that he would make some unexpected mistakes during the

conversation.

## IV. Phonological Analysis

Generally speaking, Yujia's pronunciation patterns in English demonstrate features of

Chinese and more specifically of the Nanjing dialect. Since the dialect of my hometown is similar

to his, I am especially familiar with these sound pattern. For example, he pronounced "language"

and "program" with falling tone, which is prevalent in the Nanjing dialect but does not typically

exist in English. Therefore, his intonation and rhyme could be somewhat unnatural. However, they

do not prevent the audience from understanding the meaning.

There are five patterns of phonological weakness in Yujia's speech. First, confusion of voiced

and voiceless sounds. For example, every time he pronounces the word "Chinese", instead of

saying /tʃaɪˈniːz/, he said it like /tʃaɪˈniːs/; also, when he pronounces the word "friends", he said it

like /frɛnts/ rather than /frɛndz/. Secondly, he adds a vowel after the consonant(s) at the end of

several words. For example, he read the word "English" as /ˈɪŋglɪʃy/, "speak" as /spiːkə/, "think"

as /θɪŋkə/ and "solve" as /sɑlvu/. Thirdly, he confused the sound /ɪ/ with /iː/ in every "is" in his

language, which sounded a bit awkward because of the ubiquity of this word. Fourth, he

mispronounced every "l" after a vowel. For example, he pronounced "well" as /weə/ and "twelve"

as /tweərv/. Lastly, he replaced /ð/ with /z/ for every word that includes a "th" such as "this" and

"there". In contrast, his strengths in pronunciation include mastery of word stress patterns, even in

those relatively long words such as "university" which consist of more than three syllables. Also, many Chinese speakers struggle to differentiate /f/ and /v/, but Yujia did not demonstrate this confusion.

There are various reasons that may explain these patterns in Yujia's pronunciation. English learners sometimes have difficulty when a non-native sound is assimilated to a native, existing category (Galloway, 2019). For example, there is no such sound as /ð/ in Chinese. For beginners, they may also have difficulty distinguishing between the sounds /s/ and /z/, which are similar in Chinese. In addition, the "l" after a vowel does not exist in Chinese, either. Also, since there is a complex relationship between the perception and production of a sound (Lightbown and Spada, 2018), for an ELL like Yujia, though, he may also struggle with the production of unfamiliar sounds in addition to the difficulty he has in hearing those sounds. Second, habits from one's native language might carry over into the new language. For example, in Chinese, every character's pronunciation ends with vowel; but in English, a word could end with consonants. For Chinese ELLs, especially adult learners whose pronunciation habits are likely to have been fossilized in the mother tongue, it would be hard to pronounce words that do not end in vowels. Lastly, I am also concerned about how he learned or acquired those sounds. Did his teachers pronounce those sounds accurately? Did they ask the students to note those special, distinct sound patterns? According to Nair, Krishnasamy and De Mello (2017), the teaching of pronunciation has been largely ignored by English language teachers. However, it is important for helping students communicate effectively; mispronunciation can make it difficult for the listener to comprehend

what is being said.

## V. Grammatical Analysis

a. Morphological Ability

For this analysis, I selected 218-word oral utterances and a 216-word written sample from Yujia. In the oral utterances, there were 271 morphemes in total. Therefore, there are 1.24 morphemes per word. In the written sample, there were 308 morphemes, which is to say, there are 1.43 morphemes per word. We see that although the two numbers do not vary much, the average number of morphemes per word in writing is still higher than that of the spoken language, which is in line with my anticipation considering Chinese-style English education. As what I have experienced in China's public school system, teachers attach much more importance to writing rather than speaking because English tests largely ignore the speaking assessment.

We see from the data that Yujia has the tendency of using more complex words in writing than in speaking; and the majority of words, no matter spoken or written, have one to two morphemes. In terms of word choice, there isn't too much difference shown between writing and speaking. However, since the writing sample is from an academic subject, naturally it will contain more hard words or field-specific words that consist of more morphemes, which would be uncommon in daily talk.

A strength in his speaking is that he used some vivid words such as "suggest" and "propagate". However, in most cases, his word choices are limited to what he had used previously, which means he is likely to use same word (e.g. "things") or words with the same roots (e.g. "propagate",

"propaganda") frequently. His morphological strength in writing is that he used diversified expressions in describing, such as "physical thoughts" and "a beautiful account of" and I did not identify any obvious morphological disadvantages.

b. Syntactic Ability

In terms of syntactic ability, situations are different in speaking and writing. In speaking, although he consciously paid attention to using linking words, there appeared a few misuses of them. For example, in the sentence "But you said you need 500 yuan to buy something for your girlfriend, but I don't have so much money.", he consecutively used two "but", which is redundant. Additionally, sometimes he would forget to use linking words. For example, I could see that he wanted to show consent to the professor before stating his own idea; however, he did not use any adversatives in between. What's more, a common error he made is that there are too few pronouns used when necessary, which is a typical problem of Chinglish (Pinkham, 2000). That is to say, he kept using the name of an object to refer to it within a short passage. For example, he said "we can use part their fees to build our university and make our university a better one", which could in fact be better if he replaces the second "our university" with "it" or "her". However, in writing, there are no such problems happening.

**VI. Semantic Analysis**

In order to see and compare lexical density of both the oral and written sample, I entered the samples into an online lexical calculator, provided on a website called "Analyze My Writing" (http://www.analyzemywriting.com/lexical_density.html). According to the websites, lexical

density is the number of lexical words or content words divided by the total number of words. In the samples I analyzed, Yujia produced 120 lexical words in the 250-word oral sample; and 117 lexical words in the 216-word written sample. Therefore, the lexical density for his oral utterance is 48.00% while written 54.17%.

If analyzing more closely, I found that most words in his oral sample belong to Tier 1 words, which consists of most basic words (Montgomery, 2017). Examples for Tier 1 words that he uttered are "want", "said", "choose", etc. There are a few Tier 2 words as well, such as "suggest" which contains multiple meanings under different circumstances and "propagate" which is a word usually used by mature language users. In his written sample, though, I see that more Tier 2 and Tier 3 words appeared, which means more "hard words" exist in it. The written material was for an academic purpose and that is why more academic vocabulary, mostly Tier 2 or Tier 3 words were involved. In fact, when I entered both the oral and written samples into usingenglish.com, it showed that for speaking, Yujia produced 9.60% hard words and 12.80% long words; for written, the data were 22.69% and 29.63%, which makes it obvious that there are many more hard and long words in his writing than in speaking.

In addition, another distinction between oral and written sample is that word choice Yujia made when writing is more diverse, compared with when he was talking without preparation. For example, he kept using "important things" when there could be many substitutes like significant, critical, essential, etc. The reason behind this may not be he does not know these words, but that he was not familiar with using synonyms to replace original words within a short discourse. Since

he had more time to consider word choice when writing, he included words with much higher

diversity in the written sample, which is his strength.

## VII. Instructional Recommendations

a. For Pragmatics

In order to improve Yujia's pragmatic skills, it is helpful if the instructor can let him know

about the content of the four maxims so that he can consciously avoid some of the mistakes that

he made during this conversation. For example, sometimes he would use redundant structures

when answering questions that he was not familiar with to allow himself more time to ponder, this

could have been avoided if he knew about the maxim of manner.

Also, since Chinese and English have different language habits (e.g. native Chinese speakers

could be more conservative in expressing strong personal emotions and thus appeared a little

indifferent), it would be more effective if he could get a general view about such differences and

how he should appropriately react in certain situations. However, since he is now living in the US,

being in such environment will automatically adjust his pragmatic skills to a more satisfactory

level.

b. For Phonology

In order to further develop pronunciation skills, teachers, if they are also non-native

themselves, should first make sure that they are able to accurately pronounce each word and

sentence so that students can acquire it unconsciously, hopefully. Also, they should purposefully

help student notice the subtle differences between different languages' sound systems. In addition,

they should encourage students to be exposed to as much authentic language environment as possible, be it a trip abroad or the tape recorder.

For Yujia, since he is in the US, I would recommend that he pays more attention to how native Americans pronounce and try simulating them. He should consciously try getting rid of the mistakes that are pointed out in this analysis or by other people as well.

c. For Grammar

It is obvious that there is an ability gap between Yujia's speaking and writing, which is a common problem for many Chinese students. The high accuracy level of grammar of his writing shows that he understands the rules perfectly. The rationale behind this gap may be explained by Chomsky's theory of "competence vs. performance" (1965) in that when he speaks and does not have time to edit what he says, he may make more mistakes than usual. For this problem, I recommend that the instructors encourage him to record himself speaking English whenever possible, and listens to it with/for him after in order to figure out common mistakes he makes. Thus, next time when he uses the same expressions, ideally, he would consciously avoid the mistakes that he has been aware of. Also, there are quite many authentic and concise English grammar books. Instructors may give specific grammar lessons based on them and even encourage him to read one so that he can develop a holistic view of grammar rules. Thirdly, he should take advantage of his exchange life in UCB to practice speaking English and accumulate diversified vocabulary when reading large amount of materials so he can feel less nervous and be more flexible when talking.

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d. For Semantics

To increase the lexical density, I recommend that when teaching him vocabulary, the English instructor could try word sorts, specifically concept sorts, so that Yujia can acquire words with similar meaning almost at the same time to avoid his always using the most familiar words (usually the words learned earliest). In addition, his instructor can purposefully add to his exercise more questions concerning synonyms and antonyms, and ask him to pay attention to the application into real life. At last, for Yujia himself, I recommend that he could consciously pay attention to word choice of native speakers around him, and make comparison to his own utterance or production. But based on Krashen's theory of comprehensible input (2003), he could only process information that he was able to understand. Therefore, he needs to expand his vocabulary as a starter.

## VIII. Reflection and Implication

This case study analyzed Yujia's language skills from aspects of pragmatics, phonology, grammar and semantics and the analysis gives the readers a general view about his language level. In addition, a few instructional recommendations were provided to help improve Yujia's language ability, which helps not only the instructors but also the student himself as well. However, since I share the first language with Yujia, while sometimes it would be easier for me to predict and then notice his mistakes in using English because I may have made similar mistakes and was pointed out by others before, sometimes it would in fact make it even harder for me to recognize those incorrect patterns especially in terms of phonology because I am too familiar with them to realize they are mistakes, which could be the biggest limitation of this study. Besides, since Yujia is

currently a college student majored in Physics, so he will not likely to get extra English instruction in the future if he does not choose to take class in English language art. Therefore, although he could improve his English skills with his own effort, I am a little worried if there is no teacher's help at all. In addition, since I have not learn much about Physics, I did not have a chance to chat with him in his academic field, where he might be more proficient in speaking and the results of the analyses could have been different.

In the future, I intend to teach middle school English learners and I think this study could be useful although it was based on a college level student. For example, in middle school in China, students start to learn IPA on textbook systematically. By this time, teachers can inform them of common mistakes Chinese students will likely to make in pronunciation for them to differentiate and design exercises for them accordingly. Also, when teaching words, teachers may apply "word sorts" into the lesson so that the students can learn words in groups, to differentiate their pronunciations and meanings. In addition, when students come to the stage of sentence making and can be engaged in a conversation, teachers can make them aware of Grice's Maxims. They can even make comparisons between Chinese and English so that the students can notice the similarities and differences of pragmatics between the two languages.

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Appendix 1

**Oral Samples from Yujia Teng:**

**Transcription for the Interview**

Q: Now, would you please introduce yourself, like what's your name, where are you now and what are you studying?

A: OK. My… my name iz(s) Yujia Teng, and my home university iz(s) Soochow University. Now I'm studying in UC Berkeley for one semester and my major iz(s) Physics.

Q: OK. And what is your native language?

A: Uh, my native language is Chinese.

Q: Now do you still have opportunities to speak your native language?

A: Hm, at here I surely have the opportunity to speak.

Q: Uh, you mean that you still have the opportunity to speak your native language here right? In Berkeley?

A: Yes.

Q: OK so… usually when do you speak your native language and with whom do you speak that?

A: I often speak in my dormitory with my… hmm friends. They (are) all from the same program with me.

Q: Oh, so they are all Chinese…

A: But when I… Yes. They are all Chinese. And when I talk to the professor or the other students

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in Berkeley, I just speak English… speak English.

Q: OK! Is there any other language that you speak besides Chinese and English?

A: No, just Chinese and English.

Q: So these are the only two languages that you speak. Okay. How long have you been learning English?

A: It's… it's about twelve… twelve years… maybe.

Q: Twelve years. Okay, that's a long time. So that's when you are… in what age? Like, or what grade were you in when you first started to learn English?

A: When I first to learn English… I remember that it's in my… about… first or second year in my primary school.

Q: First or second year in your primary school! And now you are in twelfth grade? No, but you are not in the twelfth grade so you have learned English for more than twelve years. It should be like fourteen years. I think.

A: I think… Yes, yes, maybe.

Q: OK, fourteen years or so. How would describe your English language ability?

A: My English language ability… I think… my oral communication (?) may not be too well. But my ability to read… read something is… I think it's pretty enough to… hmmm… to help me finish something.

Q: So, you mean that… hmm for reading and writing, it is fine for you. But for speaking it's a little bit difficult.

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A: Yes.

Q: Do you have any difficulty in listening?

A: Listening…

Q: Yes.

A: Yes, I have a little difficult(y). But it's much better now.

Q: OK… Hmmm when you speak English, do you feel that sometimes you have difficulty expressing something?

A: Yes.

Q: So, when you face that difficulty, what would you do?

A: When I me(e)t the difficult(y), I always want to calm down and think about which word should I choose to express myself better… (or) to use some gestures to help me.

Q: Use some gestures to help you! That's a good idea actually. Hmmm… What do you do now to learn English? Like, you are now in Berkeley, so what do you usually do in order to improve your English skills?

A: You mean what I do to improve my English skill?

Q: Yes. Because you are still learning English. So what do you do to improve English now in the US?

A: For the reading part, I read many very very much textbook(s)… about hundreds of pages a week. And for the speaking, I will try my best to communicate with local people or the professor.

Q: Do you feel now that you have some progress in English?

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A: Yes. My reading ability surely improved a lot. I need to finish reading many pages in a short time.

Q: Oh, that's great. Can you describe a typical English class in your home country? For example, in middle school or in elementary school. You can choose whatever you like… to describe a typical English class.

A: Describe the difficulty in a class?

Q: I mean, to describe a typical English class. Like how do you have lessons in China, either in your elementary or middle school or whatever else kind of degree you'd like to describe.

A: In my middle school, my English classes are always made us to… uh… first the teacher let us to read the text… textbook together. And the teachers teach… uh, taught us many grammars or new words and we need to mem… memorize them. And we do this is… we prepare for the exams. But after the class I surely … (?) have not learnt much oral English ability.

Q: Oh, OK. Thank you for talking about yourself. And now I will give you some situations where you need to put yourself in other's shoes, to imagine that you are the person I'm describing. And try to talk to me as realistic as possible. Do you understand what I'm talking about?

A: Yes.

**Simulated situations:**

**(You have been working for a professor at the university now for some time. The professor offers you an opportunity to pursue a PhD, but it involves moving. You don't want to go. Today, the she calls you into her office.)**

Yujia: Oh, thank you, thank you, professor. I really want to get that PhD. But I think that is a little far away from me and I don't want to move to that place.

**(Because of some urgent need, you have just withdrawn 500 [yen] from the bank. Your classmate Li Jun approaches you. obviously, he wants to borrow money from you.)**

Yujia: I really want to help you. But you said you need 500 yuan to buy something for your girlfriend, but I don't have so much money. So, I would suggest… you can choose another gift to buy for your girlfriend. I think that's better solution to your situation now.

**(You are in a university class and are engaged in a debate about an important topic in your field. You disagree with your classmates, but want to disagree respectfully.)**

Yujia: Hi, the principal. You may think that our school's money may not be enough to spend on other events, because this money should be used on many important things like inviting famous scientists to our school to give us lectures or something else. Yes, these are very important things. We should work on a solution to make our school more money. For example, we can spend money to propagate ours school. Since after we do it, more and more people will know our school and choose our school because we can propagate our school use our many important merits and advantages. And at the same time, we should cover many disadvantages such as the dormitory or facility and these things may not good. And when we doing the propaganda, we can just make our school more well-known. At last, more and more students will choose our school and we can use part their fees to build our university and make our university a better one. Yeah, that's all.

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<center>Appendix 2</center>

**Written Sample from Yujia Teng:**

**(How did Max Planck's understanding of the meaning of his eponymous constant h evolve over time?)**

When Planck first introduced this constant, he just represented it as a constant of proportionality without much physical thought (didn't understand it) about it since at that time, Maxwell's theory already gave a beautiful account of light and treated it like a wave rather than particles. Afterwards, Planck found that the hypothesis of energy quanta would save the day and thought that he must obtain a positive result, under any circumstances and at whatever cost. After this, his another theory again contained the constant h, which gave him an accurate number of Avogadro's number. Moreover, Planck used this theory to get the natural unit of electric charge. With these results, Planck realized that quanta is quite important and h must have some meaning behind it, such as electrodynamic meaning, which could make the radiation theory be satisfactory.

Since an elementary quantum of electric charge e exists, Planck predicted that an elementary quantum of energy h may also exist. However, in later time, Planck was ready to give up even the quantized emission of radiation since he had arrived at the radiation law without having to restrict the energy of the oscillator to quantized energies, where h governed only the interaction between oscillators and free particles, and the absorption and emission of radiation followed the classical laws.

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